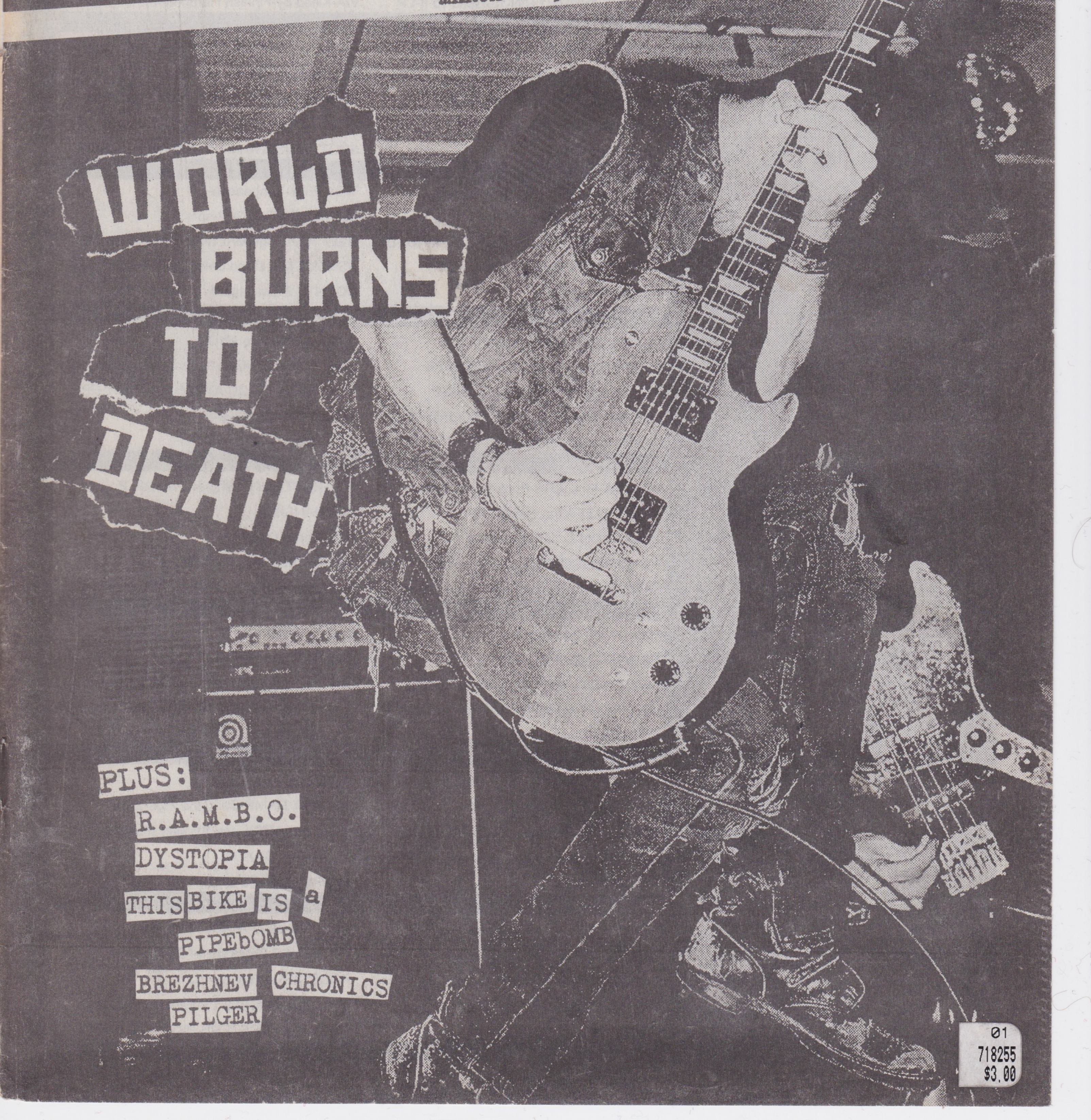
MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

MARCH 2003 * issue number 238 * three dollars



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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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•Everywhere else: $8 each (air) or $5.50 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $33 (surface).
Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-154, 156-157, 159-163, 166, 168-175, 178-181, 184-211, 213-227, 229-237 are as stated above in subscription info. See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.
Ad Copy In (with payment): by 15th of previous month–NO LATER!!!
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

★★ AD RATES & SIZES!! ★★
1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $30
1/3 page long: (2 3/8" x 10") $85
1/3 page square: (5" x 4 7/8") $100
1/2 page: (7 1/4" x 5") $150
Full page (7 1/4" x 10") $400

AD CRITERIA:
We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads on paper, properly sized.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible.

COVER: Mike Thorn
Back cover photo: Nicolas Sursock

SELL MRR AT GIGS: Within the US, they're $1.50 each ppd, cash up front. Contact us for non-US orders. Must order 5 or more of the same issue.

NEWSSTAND circulation through Big Top Newsstand Services, a division of the IPA. For more information call (415) 643-0161 or fax (415) 643-2983 or E-mail: Info@BigTopPubs.com.
Also available from: No Idea, Sound Idea, Revolver, Get Hip, Smash, Subterranean, Last Gasp, See Hear, Armadillo, Ubiquity, Choke Inc, Desert Moon, and Marginal.
See page 5 for foreign distribution info.

Please send all records, zines, letters, articles, scene reports, photos, subscriptions, interviews, ads, etc., to:
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PO BOX 460760
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0760
Phone (415) 923-9814
Fax (415) 923-9617
www.maximumrocknroll.com
maximumrnr@mindspring.com
(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

- KRAYS-A Time for Action-LP
- DISTRACTION-Calling All Radios-LP
- TRAGEDY-Vengeance-LP
- WASTED-Down and Out-LP
- ONION FLAVORED RINGS-Used To It-LP
- WHITE FLAG-LP/FM KNIVES-EP
- LOS VILLIANS-EP/SCATHA/DAGDA-split EP
- EXPLODING HEARTS-EP/AGAINST ME-EP
- BILLY CHILDISH-25 Years-LP
- V/A-Killed by Finnish Hardcore-LP

ROB COONS

- BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS-Ghoulish Reminders-EP
- TRAGEDY-Vengeance-LP
- V/A-Possessed to Skate Vol. Two-10"
- SEEIN RED/SHIKARI-split 10"
- V/A-Thrashmaster-LP
- GASMASK/COWARD-split EP
- V/A-Killed by Finnish Hardcore-LP
- LOS CRUDOS/REVERSAL OF MAN-split LP
- FRAMTID-Under the Ashes-LP
- SCOTT BAIO'S ARMY/NUNSLAUGHTER-live

ARWEN CURRY

- ONION FLAVORED RINGS-Used To It-LP
- TRIGGERS-Gasoline-EP
- THIS IS MY FIST-I Don't Want to Scare You-EP
- FM KNIVES-Promotional Device-EP
- FAT DAY-Poop-EP
- TRAGEDY-Vengeance-LP
- SEEIN RED/SHIKARI-split 10"
- NEW TOWN ANIMALS-Fashion Fallout-45
- AGAINST ME!-Disco Before the Breakdown-EP
- COUNTY Z-Graveyards & Grocery Carts-LP

JONATHAN FLOYD

- CURSE-CD/SHEMPS-live
- DISTRACTION-Calling All Radios-LP
- FM KNIVES-Promotional Device-EP
- NEW MEXICAN DISASTER SQUAD-CD
- ONION FLAVORED RINGS-Used To It-LP
- RADON-We Bare All-CD
- THIS IS MY FIST-I Don't Want to Scare You-EP
- DER TRICK IST ZU ATMEN-Kopf Herz-EP
- TRIGGERS-Gasoline-EP
- WASTED-Down and Out-LP

JEFF HEERMANN

- MOORAT FINGERS-Punk (As in Prison)-CD
- SNUKY TATE-Who Cares?-EP
- OPERATION S-Délinquante-45
- SUPERHELICOPTER LTD-Blow My Cool-45
- DARE DARE DEVIL/EXXON VALDEZ-split EP
- DISTRACTION-Calling All Radios-LP
- ORPHANS-live
- BBQ-Three Days-45
- BILLY CHILDISH-25 Years-3xLP
- OKMONIKS-Rustle Up Some Action-EP

KENNY KAOS

- FM KNIVES-Estrogen-EP
- TRIGGERS-Gasoline-EP
- DIRTBOMBS-Australian Sing-A-Long-45
- NEW TOWN ANIMALS-Fashion Fallout-45
- STITCHES-Twelve Imaginary Inches-LP
- DISTRACTION-Calling All Radios-LP
- THE ENDS-I'm Sorry-45
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Making Teenage-45
- INTELLIGENCE/POPULAR SHAPES-split EP
- OKMONIKS-Rustle Up Some Action-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- SUPERHELICOPTER LTD-Blow My Cool-45
- FM KNIVES-Estrogen-EP
- DIRTBOMBS-Australian Sing-A-Long-45
- OKMONIKS-Rustle Up Some Action-EP
- FAT DAY-Poop-EP
- TRIGGERS-Gasoline-EP
- VIOLENT RAMP-Grind the Pigs-EP
- GASOLHEADS-Lying Shooter Position-CD
- BBQ-Three Days-45
- ANDRE RUBLEV-film

RAY LUJAN

- STITCHES-Twelve Imaginary Inches-LP
- HENCHMEN-Lust for Glory-CD
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Teenage Faces-45
- DIRT BIKE ANNIE-It Ain't Easy-CD
- REVILLOS-Attack-CD
- COLT-Marek-LP/RADON-We Bare All-CD
- FM KNIVES-Promotional Device-EP
- PODSTAR-Lovely 32-CD
- NEW TOWN ANIMALS-Fashion Fallout-45
- GUITAR GANGSTERS-Pleasantville-CD

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

BOBBY MANIC

- BILLY CHILDISH-25 Years-3xLP
- BBQ-Three Days-45
- FM KNIVES-Promotional Device-EP
- EXPLODING HEARTS-Making Teenage-45
- HENTCHMEN-Lust For Glory-CD

WILL RISK

- ONION FLAVORED RINGS-Used To It-LP
- V/A-Possessed to Skate Vol. Two-10"
- AGAINST ME!-Disco Before the Breakdown-EP
- GREAT CLEARING OFF/SOUND OF FAILURE split EP
- TRAGEDY-Vengeance-LP/WASTED-LP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- THIS IS MY FIST-I Don't Want to Scare You-EP
- V/A-Possessed to Skate Vol. Two-10"
- FAT DAY-Poop-EP/TRAGEDY-Vengeance-LP
- COLT-Marek-LP/WHITE FLAG-LP
- ONION FLAVORED RINGS-LP
- FM KNIVES-EP/ROBOT ATTACK-EP
- COUNTY Z-LP/ROGERS SISTERS-45
- GREAT CLEARING OFF/SOUND OF FAILURE split EP
- BLACKEYES/EARLY HUMANS-split EP
- SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS-EP

WILLIE NELSON

- FAT DAY-Poop-EP/FRAMTID-LP
- SICK TERROR-Aborto Legal-EP
- BLOODSPIT NIGHTS-Ghoulish Reminders-EP
- ZEROID-EP & LP
- V/A-Possessed to Skate Vol. Two-10"
- V/A-Thrashmaster-LP
- AFFRAY/TOKENTANTRUM-split LP
- SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS-EP
- OHEISVASARA-Vasaranmerkki-EP
- THRASHFEST IV

DONNA POOLE

- FM KNIVES-Promotional Device-EP
- OKMONIKS-Rustle Up Some Action-EP
- TRIGGERS-Gasoline-EP
- THEE FINE LINES/JIM JIMS-split EP
- ROGERS SISTERS-45
- STITCHES-Twelve Imaginary Inches-LP
- TRIGGERS-Gasoline-EP
- NEW TOWN ANIMALS-Fashion Fallout-45
- FAT DAY-Poop-EP
- V/A-Adios Joey Ramone-CD

BRUCE ROEHRS

- HAMMERLOCK-live/SICK TERROR-EP
- MOLOTOV COCKTAIL-Once Upon a Time-CD
- LOWER CLASS BRATS/NY REL-X-live
- ANTISEEN-Honour Among Thieves-LP
- STITCHES-Twelve Imaginary Inches-LP
- RUNNIN' RIOT/TOWER BLOCKS-split EP
- GASMASK/COWARD-split LP
- BOILS-Ripping Waters-CD
- BLOODSPIT NIGHTS-Ghoulish Reminders-EP
- V/A-Killed by Finnish Hardcore-LP

MIKE THORN

- V/A-Actions Speak Louder-LP/FM KNIVES-EP
- FRAMTID-LP/PURGEN-LP/TRAGEDY-LP
- TRIGGERS-EP/WASTED-LP/SICK TERROR-EP
- BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS-EP/EXPLODING HEARTS-EP
- GASMASK/COWARD-split LP/SICARII-live
- CAUSTIC CHRIST/INTENSE YOUTH-split EP
- V/A-Thrashmaster-LP /SELF DEFENSE-live
- THIS IS MY FIST-EP/NEUROSE URBANA-EP
- ONION FLAVORED RINGS-Used To It-LP
- SEEIN RED/SHIKARI-split 10"

RYAN WELLS

- VIOLENT RAMP-Grind the Pigs-EP
- COUNTY Z-Graveyards & Grocery Carts-LP
- INTELIGENCE/POPULAR SHAPES-split EP
- SNUKY TATE-Who Cares?-EP
- FM KNIVES-Estrogen-7"
- DOUBT-Contrast Disorder-EP
- OKMONIKS-Sorority Club-EP
- OPERATION S-Délinquante-45
- DIRTBOMBS-Sing Along-EP
- TRIGGERS-Gasoline-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- Artcore #18
- Dunk & Piss #9
- Earquake #80
- I'm Johnny and I Don't Give a Fuck #5
- Media Reader #6
- Rad Party #30
- Revival Ink #3
- Roctober #34
- Straight Sob #4
- Riot 77 #5

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Chris(tine) Boarts
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Mark Hanford
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Erika Ransom
George Tabb
Wells Tipley
Felix Von Havoc
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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, Distemper, Enewetak, UK Subs, Luxo Champ, Jake Sayless, "Pioneers of Punk."

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City , Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Tobocman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct. '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Oct. '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead

#235/Nov. '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Dec. '02. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore Fanzine, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Jan. '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

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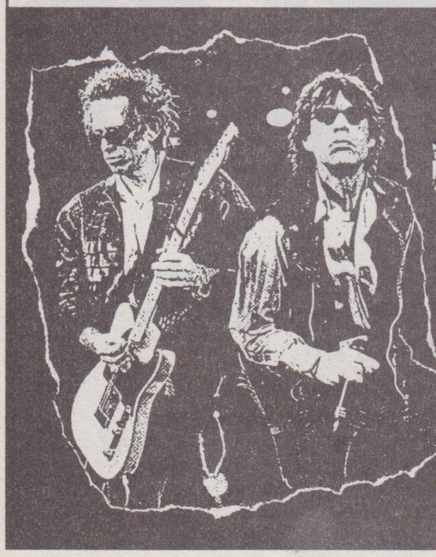

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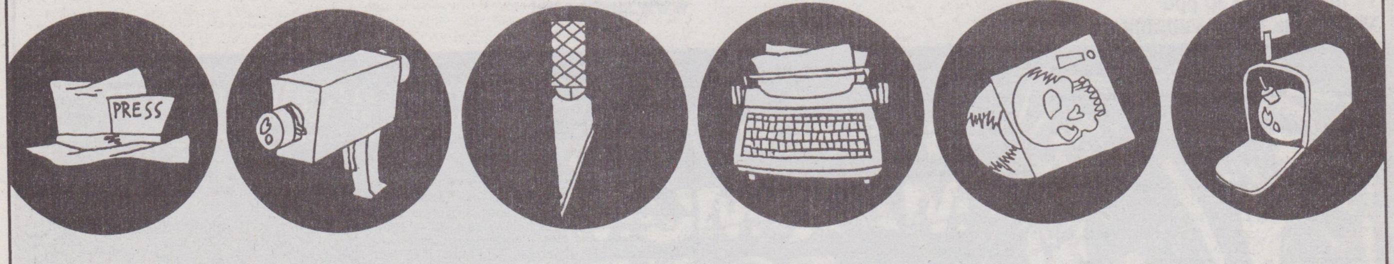

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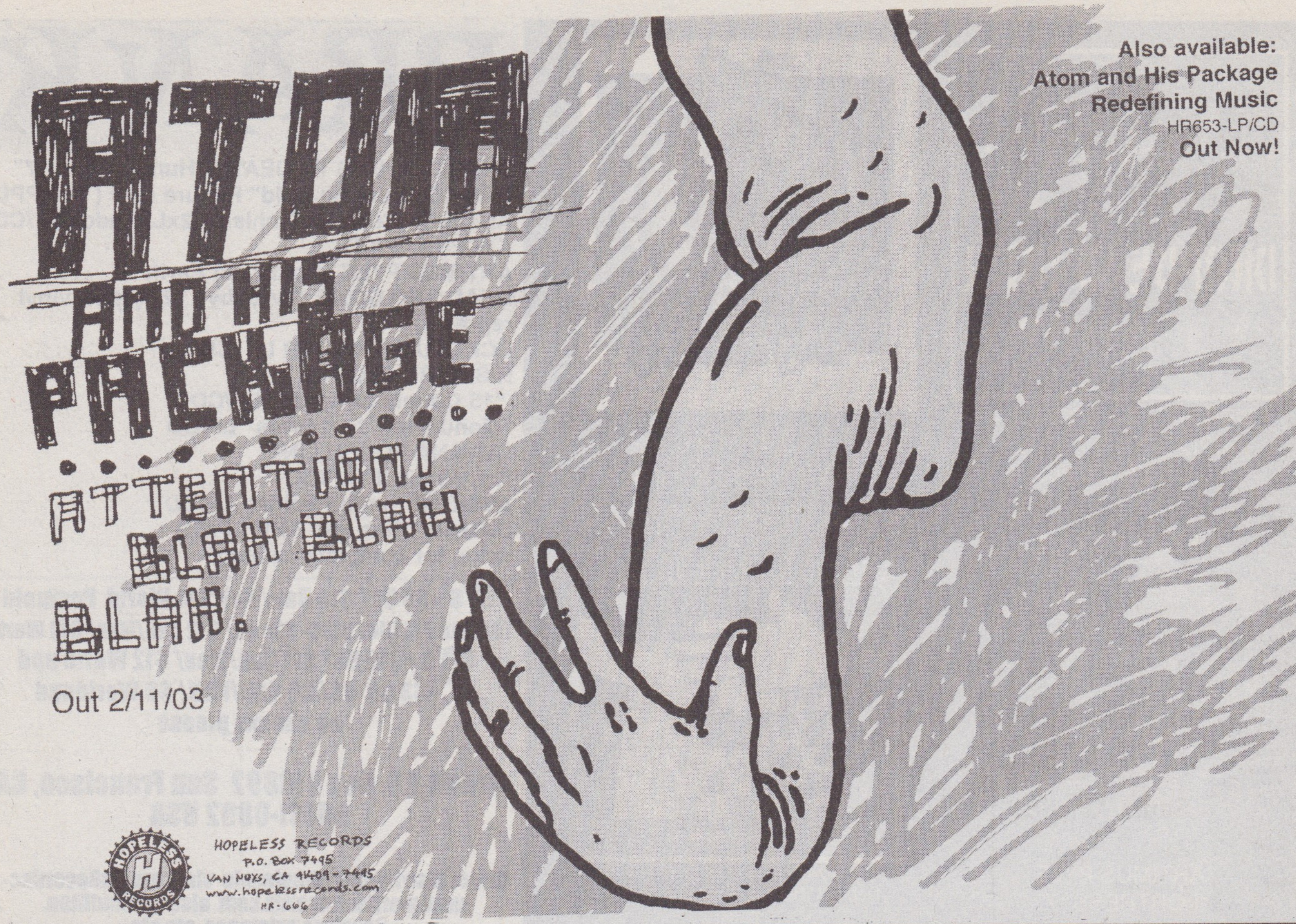

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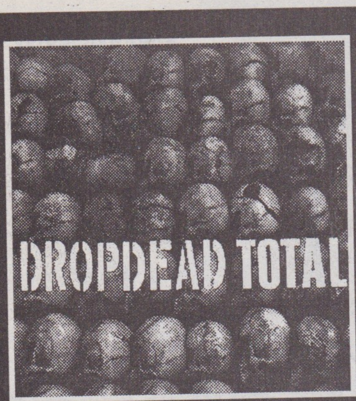

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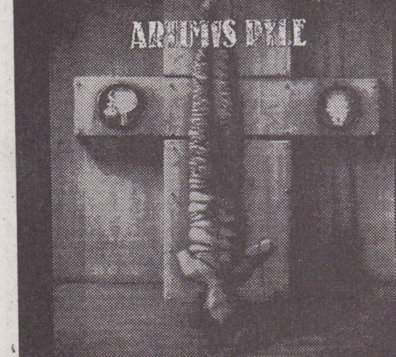

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LETTERS

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MRR:

The Clash, some great tunes—well, up till *London Calling*, anyway. Then, oh dear... They were always a bunch of poseurs and opportunists, not that that made them much different from most in the punk scene. As for their much-touted "political input" to punk rock...bollox. Listen to their xenophobic whining about Germany in the *Punk in London* documentary, and as Capt. Sensible used to love to say on stage, "I'm so bored with the USA? Where have they run off to now they got the money hey?" Their politics were no more than their contemporaries, Sham 69's, and countless later others like The Ruts. The difference was The Clash "made it big," made their movement, such that it was, into a money-making machine, and never looked back. Still, they did make some great records, and for that, Joe, thanx...

Jon@active

Dear *Maximumrocknroll*:

I just finished reading Martin Sorrendeguy's irate letter regarding my comments about Limpwrist in the Oath interview in the November issue of *MRR*. For those who even care to pay to attention to what happened, Martin attacks me personally for citing Limpwrist in a negative context—because I'm the first to have done it—and attempts to present me as though I'm confused, vengeful, and embittered for his reluctance to deal with the Oath. What he fails to point out is that other members of Limpwrist were equally as enthusiastic of talk about both bands touring together and doing a split record. It was simply decided between us that it should be me to approach Martin on both band's behalf to discuss ideas that we'd come up with. Clearly it wasn't such an even split between bands as he portrays it. Granted, no one seemed to have spoken up in the right time, but for me to say that "I can't imagine what Limpwrist's purpose as being that interested for very long" was merely exemplifying my point that hardcore today seems little more than a carefully contained rebellion. This is no hierarchy in my eyes, but if people are gonna be petty, I can take some stabs, sure, because clearly now it's open season.

To me, Martin is the next Bill Cosby. In twenty years he'll still be blabbing on forever between every song thinking people still need to hear his unclever ramblings on how triumphant it is to circle pit naked with an X on your dick. The only problem was he was never funny to begin with, or garnered more than a PG-13 rating. It's lucky for him his saving grace relied on the fact that Limpwrist's guitarist could stretch out a good Negative Approach riff long enough to fill up a whole record for his ineffectual stabs at society. This, coupled with his constant hope of bossing around yet another band full of pushovers, proves he might seriously consider a future in rock journalism after the fourth, fifth, and sixth Limpwrist LPs enlighten our world. But sadly, after all is rehashed and pounded into our skulls, there really was no Limpwrist after all. There was only Martin the Ego with three cardboard cut-outs holding instruments obediently positioned behind him on stage. In truth, these interchangeable silhouettes, or band members as we call them, were nothing more Martin's contrived pile of Lincoln Logs. It is here where his heart-of-gold charisma comes blindingly into play, flipped on like a switch, from the self-professed executioner of the bogus—the same artful dodger of blame and ridicule who drowns you in his sweet-talk; the presumptuous master of smoke-and-mirror trickery of unfair record trades who leaves you so confused you'll love him for getting screwed all the same. "Oh, it can't be Me, Oh heaven's no!" Yet this is coming from the only person I know who'd make a documentary film and have the audacity to interview himself in it. Maybe someone ought to ask Martin who in his band is really on his side and who's in it for the ride. He's swimming around in his thick skull thinking legitimate criticism of his band is shit talking, something that He the Chosen One is exempt from. His convoluted fest band is anything but a threat, a simple fact which in his letter he so cautiously avoids pursuing. And that's just it: Martin got burned. No one burns Martin or feel his wrath! Ooh! His mature defense tactic is to reduce and reverse everything to a deeper personal issue that obviously someone like me could only be hiding behind, because how on earth could anyone second-guess The Almighty Untouchable? Yet in his diatribe, Martin also fails to point out several key factors in the Oath interview which makes me question if he can even read. We are the first to criticize ourselves. We never sparked a controversy, we avoided one. It is our last concern that anyone cares about our band (believe it or not, Martin, but in music there are people involved that don't care about popularity). Porn is not shocking, neither are we—duh! We never assumed anything. Ebullition does not sell our record, and doesn't only to avoid entanglements with the law. One point the Oath record in question hoped to make was to remove redundant protests that scores of movers and shakers like Martin rely on to stay respected, the kinds of timely folks who show up at the right shows and never pay to get in and get records for free from everyone. He acts as if people have no right to speak out, while he's floating around safe in his hardcore bubble, above us all, where he's been in for far too long. Martin reacts in predictable, cheap-shot fashions in a feeble attempt to cover up his own inadequacy of being in a barely breathing band made up with people who all hate each other. If it's such an issue of us versus you, Martin, why are we still on your guitarist Mark Telfian's gay rights compilation? Why is it that I work with Mark everyday, and he thought the whole issue of speaking out against Limpwrist was funny, well-deserved, and only makes it even better that both of our bands will be back to back on not one, but two compilations, both of which you were so eager to be on? Well guess what, buddy, you don't get your fucking song back, it stays! How do you like that? We'll be etched into your laughable resentment for all time, and you can write us off and make as many bitchy comments about us you want, but there carved into vinyl for all for eternity is the proof that you don't get your fucking way with everybody, least of all, me. My final suggestions to you are:

1. Quit writing songs addressed to famous people like Dr. Laura—trust me, she isn't listening, and
2. Kill your talking skits in between songs. Frankly they're just totally embarrassing.

To all *MRR* readers, this is what keeps us all alive. No apologies from me.
Mark Mccoy

MRR:

I am responding to a column in the January issue. The column "How Much Art I Can Take" is one that I feel to be of great importance during these political times. It is this very issue of art verses politics that I feel we're lacking in the columns. I feel the issues of why punks are not more into art can be summed up in the following statement by the artist Philip Guston: "What kind of man am I, sitting at home, reading magazines, going into a frustrated fury about everything—and then going into the studio to adjust a red to a blue." This is the point of contention. This is how I feel we should be looking at this issue. I found the column a breath of fresh air in so many ways. However, it did come off as glib in parts, and underthought. I hope this can stimulate further columns on the subject.
thanks,
Tim in Burlington.

MRR:

On September first, my best friend Kevin and I took off to New Jersey for the Holidays in the Sun punk concert. We came up with $500 to buy a piece of shit minivan to get us to the concert on the sixth. Living in Northern Minnesota, we had quite the trip in store for us. We had no money in our pockets and lived off panhandling for gas and beer. We made it to Elkhart, Indiana, got a misdemeanor for not paying a toll booth, and our fuckin' van broke down. So we stayed the night in our van and shared a 40 oz. of Bud Ice. The next day we tried everything to get money. Churches, crisis centers, and help lines. All we got was a ten dollar gift certificate for a lame ass grocery store. And at the bottom it read: "No liquor or cigarettes can be bought with this certificate." So it did us no fuckin' good. Lo and behold, our van decided to work. Being three quarters of the way there, we decided to turn back. We came up with $100 and headed for home. We knew we were low on oil but just figured... fuck it—let's get beer! Whoops. Van stalled on highway, engine locked up, and the truck took our last $40 to bring us one fuckin' mile to a wayside rest. So we drank our beer and again, slept in our van. Someone we will just call "the troll" picked us up and brought us to St. Paul, Minnesota. We made our way home, finally, around the 14th, and that's when depression struck us. The concert we waited for all summer, 90 bands in three days... and we missed it. But Flatus came to St. Cloud the 12th of October, and we did get to see them. You made our summer, Flatus! We love you guys! Budget beer forever.
—Quinn Nelson and Kevin Kling

Dearest *MRR*:

I have enjoyed your publication for quite a few years but lately I have had a falling out of sorts. The fibers in your magazine seem to be getting coarser as the years go by. Do you use recycled paper or something? It feels like fucking sandpaper. I have written this letter to ask that you please use a thinner grade. Maybe tissue paper. Or real cheap paper. Also, if you could, try and use less ink. It is always rubbing off on my skin and causing a general mess of things. Please consider these things and remember who the true fans of *Maximumrocknroll* are.
Sincerely,
Fixed Resistor

Dear Fixed Resistor,
Ha ha ha. It ***is*** *fucking sandpaper! Glad somebody noticed after all these years.*
Arwen

Hi *MRR*:

In your December issue the name of our 7" is wrong—it's actually NBC Mayhem, not ABC Mayhem. Don't let it happen again. Later!
xfilesx

MRR:

I am searching for an old friend...This friend is Lena Cichowsky. He was singer of the punk band Momido 7 of Dusseldorf, Germany, and his last house was in AK 47 (squat) on the street Kiefernstr 23 Dusseldorf. Lena has one kid named Seraphina. Please, do you know my friend? Send me your new address and mail and pass my mail on- Thanks!!
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dekadencia_punk@hotmail.com

Maximum:

The reason why I'm writing this letter is to warn people about Jettison Records. I recently ordered a CD by a band called The Bomb through Jettison Records's website. I paid by credit card through Paypal and waited about two or three weeks before I sent an email asking them if my order had been sent out yet. Two days went by and still no answer, so I sent another email and finally received a response back from Jeff Pezzati, who is their lead singer and ex-lead singer of the old Chicago band Naked Raygun. He told me that he was sorry about the delay, gave me some story about it being the holidays and them changing offices, but assured me I would receive it by next week and for me not to take it personally because that is how they treat all their customers. The next two weeks came and went without a CD so I finally sent an email asking them to cancel my order which was never canceled and my email was not replied to. Order at your own risk!
Thanks
Jay Solo

Jettison responds:
I left this order to be filled by an "intern" who assured me that he took care of it. Then when Jay told us of his plight we weren't sure if we were being had or what the case was. My guy filling orders insists that he sent it. Anyway I'm sending Jay one this week. It's too bad that he thinks I said "for me not to take it personal because that is how they treat all their customers." That's crazy.
Jeff Pezzati

MRR:

Greetings from the Belly of the Beast (the mighty California state prison system). I have a bone to pick with whoever is keeping the PO Box for *Flipside* open. I sent 25 bones to *Flipside* like five months ago. I know now that *Flipside* no longer exists. When I found out they were no longer on the map (two, three months back?) I promptly shot them (whoever that is?) a letter asking for my cash back. I wrote another letter after I received no response the first time. The letters never came back, this leads me to believe some scum buzzard made off with my money. Like I said I'm in prison, my hands are tied. I believe this here letter to *Max R/R* is a good way to vent. I'm in the same prison as Mr. Shane Williams (long time writer for *Flipside*). Unfortunately we (Shane and I) are not on the same yard. So I have no real way of finding out what happened to *Flipside*. And more importantly, what happened with my cash?! So Shane, if you're reading this, could you right this wrong? I realize you're in the same boat as me, but I don't know any of those cats down at *Flipside* and you do. Thank you!!!

Moving on. Looks like we have another four years of Gov. Davis. The selection was sorry. It's unnerving in general to think that people in general are hellbent or brain-washed into thinking that it's either Republican or Democrat. We need guys like Matthew Grey. He was an Independent. Richard Riordan would have been better than these two fucks (Davis and Simon)! Hey if you live in or near San Luis Obispo, CA, there's a local college station (Cal Poly KCPR 91.3) that has a solid punk show that comes on every Wednesday night from 8 to 11. That show keeps a lot of us smiling. We're able to keep up on new music and enjoy the old stuff as well. Peace, Love and Pitbulls. So long…

Stevo, aka
Philip Showalter / H—35900 3340 / PO Box 8103 / San Luis Obispo, CA 9349

Dear *MRR* readers:

I would like to add something to my letter which was printed in *MRR* #236 (Jan '03), dealing with Haunted Town Records from Chicago, who are selling records by bands/record labels connected with the right wing scene. My letter has been answered by Matt (Haunted Town Records) and by Uffe (Ultima Thule/Headhunters) from Sweden. Matt tried to make me and the *Plastic Bomb* fanzine look like as if we're a sort of a leftist political group who're trying to fuck up HTR's business. Matt says that he fears being involved into a conflict of different groups/bands/labels from Europe and that he doesn't have anything to do with it. Matt often repeats that he doesn't follow any politics; that he just runs a simple punk rock label, no more, no less. First of all, I have to mention that the releases by HTR don't feature any racial or fascist content. Matt does put out punk records and his list of records looks attractive. Point. In my letter I mentioned that HTR sells "racist crap" through their mail order, stuff by other record labels and bands with whom HTR does trade. I think I have to explain about what I was talking about. HTR did put out a 7" by Sweden's Headhunters. The members of the Headhunters are the very same guys who play for Ultima Thule. I was more than pissed off to see that *MRR* printed the letter of Uffe/Ultima Thule, i.e. that Uffe was given the chance to express his beliefs...that "he loves his country, but not hate other people." I found it very insulting to see his letter being printed, at least without any comment from *MRR*. Ultima Thule are the icons of the right wing scene in Europe. Check out their home page (www.Ultima Thule.se), which is filled with nationalistic items, may it be flags, records, or shirts. Both bands, Ultima Thule as well as the Headhunters, played various times in Germany, always just to right wing audiences. Anyone in Europe who runs a fanzine or distribution and who has a political punk approach will never ever support or deal with these Swedes.

Some words on Dim Records/Germany: Their homepage doesn't operate any longer. There's just a sign saying: "National Pride Worldwide." On Dim Records you will also find records by the Jinx and Steelcapped Strength (both from Sweden), who are being sold via Haunted Town. The vocalist for the Jinx used to sing for Midgards Soner, probably the most infamous right wing band from Sweden who ever existed. Fortunately they're broken up. Recently I found on a right wing skinhead home page (www.punksnotred.com) an interview with Bisson (vocals and guitar) of Steelcapped Strength, where he mentioned that his all-time faves are Skrewdriver and lotsa other RAC (Rock Against Communism) bands, plus he likes racist German bands like Endstufe and Kampfzone. Haunted Town views Steelcapped Strength as "excellent music, classic oi." Haunted Town also sells items by Blind Beggar Records from Germany, which is also connected with the RAC scene. Swen from *Plastic Bomb* mentioned this in his letter, which also was printed in *MRR* #236. I would also like to give you some information on the German band Pobel & Gesocks, whose vocalist Willy Wucher also does the *Scumfuck Tradition* Fanzine as well as a mail order. Both products of Willy Wucher, his band and zine, have been reviewed in *MRR* and given good reviews. The lyrics don't carry racist lyrics. Their songs are filled with dumb beer spilling and sexist slogans, which attracts a lot skinheads out of the RAC/right wing scene. This might not be the band's problem, you might say. In 1999 the police had an investigation on the Scumfuck Mailorder, and the official 1999 report by the German State Security (Verfassungsschutz Bericht) said that Willy does sell mostly punk and hardcore items, but also right wing items. Just tonight (4th of Jan. '03) I checked the Scumfuck mail order program, where you find records by Skrewdriver, Ultima Thule, Headhunters, Perkele, Jinx, Trabireiter, Kampfzone... Therefore, please re-read the Pobel & Gesocks CD review in *MRR* #236...why do you think does "the logo looks dangerously close to the right wing Hammmerskins logo"?

Perhaps this is a hint for some *MRR* reviewers, for example for Bruce Roehrs, to do their homework before doing a review. I and my other mates at *Plastic Bomb* got the impression that you need some help for the reviews, in case you receive something whose lyrics you don't understand or in case a record might be out of the right wing scene. Please check following home page: www.asgardversand.de! This is a German White Power distro. Check their music/CD list with international and German RAC/ White Power bands. Their mail order list does include all the above mentioned bands who are being sold by Haunted Town Records. We at *Plastic Bomb* just don't deal with people/bands/distros who are connected with the unpolitical/right wing scene. Last years spring (#38) and summer (#39) issues of *Plastic Bomb* featured large articles on this matter. We got in touch with all large German record labels, asking them on how they feel about seeing their releases being distributed by mail orders who also sell RAC and right wing records. All the labels said that they hate that and that they will do everything possible to not be sold to such asshole distributions. But everyone who runs a record label knows how difficult it is if your stuff gets sold through a second, third, or fourth person.

I don't think that our behavior promotes "one law for them and another law for us," like Matt/HTR wrote in his letter. Here in Germany another campaign is happening, which is called "Good Night White Pride," which is directed against the growing influence of right wing assholes inside the hardcore scene. You see—we do take a strong stand against patriotic/RAC/White Power bands and all people/distros/labels/fanzines who support this shit. The lyrical content of bands like the Headhunters, Jinx, Perkele, etc. might not be openly racist, like for example from Skrewdriver, but these bands are closely connected to the right wing scene. They are friends with the hardline White Power people, they share the same audience, they share their beer. Do we really need this patriotic shit? Hey, and please don't tell me ever again that the first Skrewdriver record is "just" punk! That's fuckin bullshit! Sorry, I just can't get it! People like Matt from Haunted Town Records really make me sick. He tries to make us believe that there's just one or two items out of his mail order that's not PC, but hey, who cares? It's just punk rock and no one's allowed to tell him what to believe and what to do. Personally I don't care about Matt. You can find at least ten items of bands inside the Haunted Town mail order who are strongly connected with the RAC/Right Wing scene. He didn't even say "Oh shit, I didn't know that about this or that band, and I'll skip that title." Matt does it on purpose. And there's a growing number of people/labels who act like Matt. If Matt/HTR doesn't like my political approach, why the hell did he pay for ads in *MRR*, which is a magazine well-known for its political approach? I wonder what Matt thought about the "War on Iraq" issue of *MRR*?

Here in Germany we have a slogan which goes like this: "being unpolitical causes brain death." The point I wanted to get across, is that the punk community should know about the background about the items being sold through the Haunted Town Records Mailorder. "I would like to give you a hint. Just act," was what I wrote. And it worked out. I did spread the word to distros here in Germany and I think none of the distros with a political punk approach will deal with Haunted Town. Besides that, I haven't seen any HTR ads anymore in *MRR*. So my letter made some people think about it and caused some action. Cool!

Oh, one last point. Who needs bands who are promoting patriotic shit? Incidents with bands on tour/contacts through interviews made us think that bands like the Casualties, Bodies, Reducers SF, Stars and Stripes, or Dropkick Murphys are also a bunch of idiots. We don't need their flag-waving "American Pride" tours or comments. Does anyone remember who said "punk is more than music"?! Can you relate to it? Boy, I'm pissed off! But on the other side I'm still very happy to see tons of cool bands and interviews in each issue of *MRR*, which stands up for its beliefs. Keep up the good work!

Helge
Plastic Bomb Fanzine, Germany
You can contact me at;
helge@plastic-bomb.de

Dear *Maximumrocknroll*:

Concerning Ultima Thule and their activity:

Ultima Thule started as a band in the early/mid 80s. They were probably the first right wing band in Sweden and their first EP was sponsored by a racist party that mainly attracted boneheads and other intellectually crippled excuses for human beings. They called their music "Viking rock" and mixed streetpunk/oi with Swedish folk music and patriot lyrics mixed with the usual bullshit, like the multiethnic society is to blame for everything that is wrong. In other words, it is the immigrants' and refugees' fault my dad can't get a job and they're to blame for everything—you've heard it all before I am sure.

They quit after that, but started playing again in the 90s, and they soon started cash in on the political situation in Sweden. It is hardly any news that the interest for the far right grows during recession and unemployment, and that was situation during the first half of the 90s in Sweden. They soon became very popular not only in White Power circles, but also with the average jock and so on, too. They got really big (they were even distributed through EMI and they wanted to sign them but the other artists protested and got three gold records) and with them a lot of other bands, and all of a sudden there was a big nazi skinhead scene in Sweden. As you might understand, it is hard for bands like that to record as no studio wants to be associated with that shit, so Ultima Thule had their own studio where they recorded their stuff. They also recorded a lot of other right wing/White Power bands and also helped them press and distribute their stuff. However, on the 10th of February, 2000, some anti-fascists burned the studio to the ground, including masters for all records on their label and one unreleased one...schweeeet! They have rebuilt it and their record label is still going too. They have organized festivals where nazi record labels have sold stuff, and also consign records to nazi distributors and record shops. They have also helped sell stuff for racist political parties and still have a huge mailorder. They have released records on nazi record labels too, so there is really nothing to discuss. They also have a side project called Headhunters that has been reviewed in this magazine and have been seen in ads too! These people should only get attention like when the studio burned down. The fact that they don't have any outspoken nazi lyrics doesn't make them better. Also, any kind of patriotism is fucking mongoloid anyway. Fuck these assholes and don't give them any coverage.

Skit ska skit ha!
Someone who knows.

I feel it should go without saying that we here at MRR are opposed to fascism, sexism, racism, homophobia, and nationalism wherever they rear their ugly heads. Personally, I'm disappointed with Matt from Haunted Town's response to being informed that some of the records in his distro are a bit dodgy. I'd like to think that he was ignorant of these bands' politics before trading for these records, but his assertion that he basically doesn't care one way or the other is a frustrating one. Matt claims that he prefers to stay uninvolved in politics, but as the ancient Greek statesmen Pericles said, "Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you." I'm a firm believer that everything in life is political to some extent—not political as in who you vote for in the county election—but as in the politics of everyday life. I believe that punk is fundamentally political—be it right wing or left wing. Personally I have no interest in aiding those of the right, nor those who boast of being without politics but never seem to have a problem time and time again aiding people with a right wing/fascist agenda. Sadly, it seems like many punks in the United States, in this political atmosphere of war fervor and the dubious targeting of immigrants from Islamic countries by the US government, are sharing Matt's rather apathetic attitude. It's depressing. We rely on punks from around the world to keep us on our toes about all these matters, because they do matter. Many thanks to those of you who do—it is highly appreciated.

—Mike Thorn

ASIAN MAN RECORDS

ASIAN MAN IS RUN OUT OF MY PARENTS GARAGE IN SUNNY CALIFORNIA. I HAVE 2 EMPLOYEES & MY MOM HELPS OUT BY PICKING UP MAIL AT THE POST OFFICE. I BEGAN PUTTING OUT RECORDS IN ~~$~~ 1991 & STARTED ASIAN MAN IN MAY OF 1996. ASIAN MAN IS A VERY SMALL LABEL! I THINK SOME OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAVE THE WRONG IDEA AND BELIEVE WE'RE THIS HUGE RECORD COMPANY WITH TONS OF EMPLOYEES. BUT WE'VE ONLY GOT ONE PHONE LINE WITH NO CALL WAITING, A FAX MACHINE, AND JUST RECENTLY PURCHASED A SECOND COMPUTER. DEPENDING ON HOW YOU LOOK @ THINGS, THIS IS EITHER A GOOD THING OR A BAD THING. FOR ME, THIS IS THE ONLY THING.(OR IN OTHER WORDS:I ENJOY BEING A LITTLE LABEL) THIS IS HOW THE LABEL WILL REMAIN. I DO MY BEST TO DO THE THINGS THAT I BELIEVE IN. I DO THIS BECAUSE I LOVE MUSIC. I ENJOY DOING ALL THE LITTLE THINGS LIKE GOING TO KINKO'S LATE AT NIGHT, MAKING ADS BY HAND, READING MAIL, AND HANGING OUT WITH THE BANDS. I ONLY WORK WITH BANDS THAT ARE ANTI-RACIST, NON-SEXIST, NON-PREJUDICE, AND POSITIVE. ALL OUR RECORDS ARE AVAILABLE FOR $8 THROUGH MAILORDER. WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO MAILORDER, BUT IF YOU DO CHOOSE TO BUY FROM A STORE, PLEASE SUPPORT THE LOCAL MOM & POP INSTEAD OF THE SUPER MEGA CHAIN STORE. I HOPE YOU CAN GRASP WHAT THIS LABEL IS ABOUT I TRULY LOVE WHAT I DO. IT'S MY PASSION. THAT'S ABOUT IT. PEACE ALWAYS, MIKE PARK

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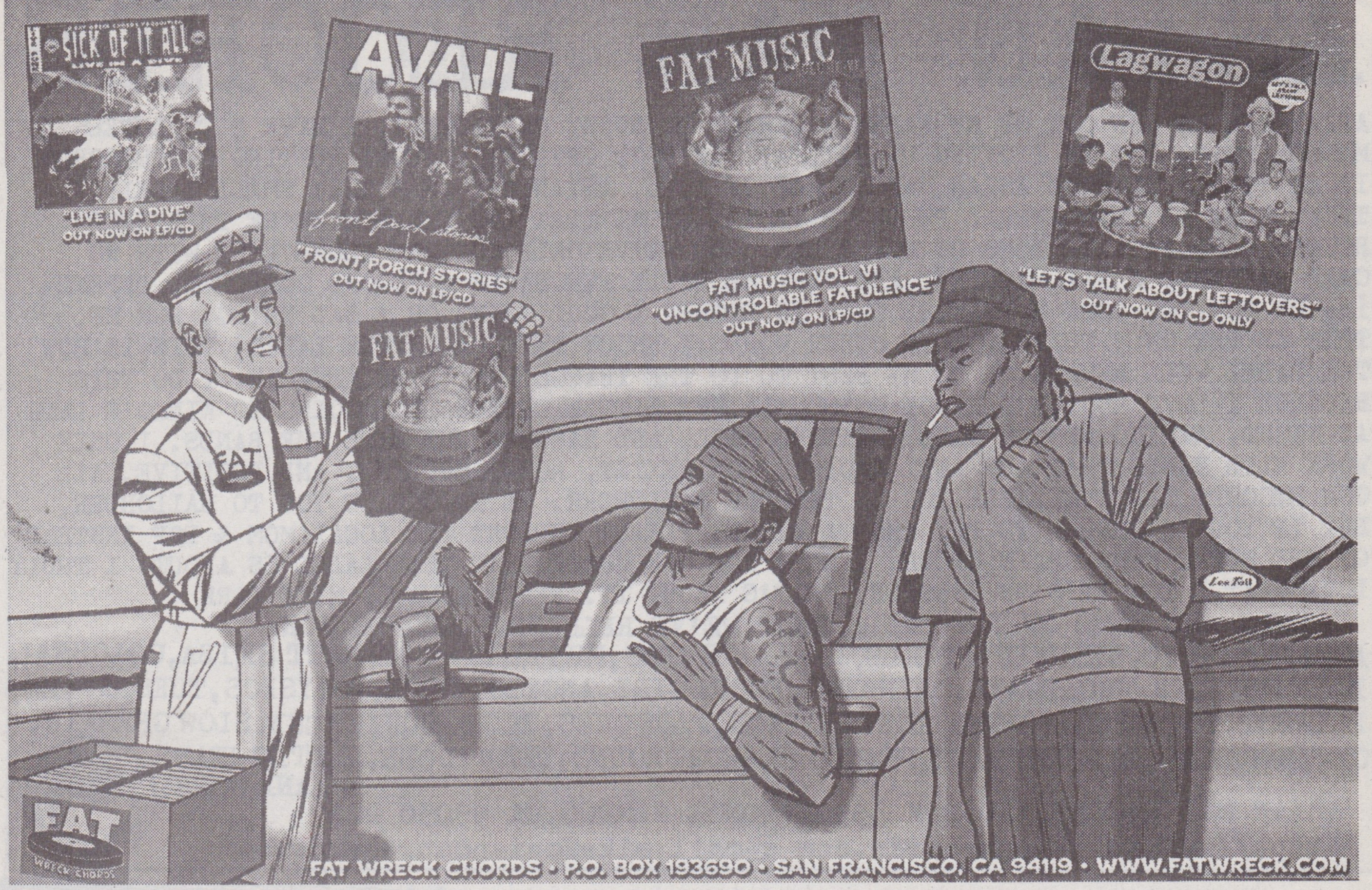

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COLUMNS

George Tabb sez
Take my life, please!

"Estes Park?" asks Fatass from behind the car rental counter at the Denver airport.

"Yes," I tell her and her big butt as she continues to scowl at my New York City driver's license.

"And you want a compact?" she asks again.

I tell her for about the fifth time that "yes, I want a compact car, and yes, I'm going to Estes Park, Colorado, and yes, I know it's in the mountains."

"You should really rent a midsize," she tells me again.

Finally, letting the three Xanax and one Atavan get the better of me, I tell Fatass I'll take the bigger car.

Ten minutes later I look at my upgraded car rental bill. For three lousy days the car is going to cost me well over two hundred bucks.

"Fuck this," I tell Wendy, and PJ, my nine-pound Yorkshire Terrier, who both just took the long flight out on the plane with me but *without* the drugs, "I'm not paying this much just because some *South Park* reject tells me I should."

I march back to the car rental counter and once again introduce myself to the Eric Cartman-looking bitch.

"Hi," I say, "I was just here renting a car and need to make a change..."

"She screams, "That was a long time ago! I don't think I can help you."

I ignore her nasal tone and the fact that it's been all of *ten minutes*. Plus, she hasn't even moved from the position she parked her fat ass in last time.

"Anyway," I explain, "I was thinking about it and I decided I really do want the compact car."

"Too late," she says, "they're probably all gone."

Me and Wendy explain it's only been ten minutes, and "probably" isn't a good enough answer, and for her to please check.

Fatass.

After about a minute of punching stuff into her computer and moaning and sighing a lot, she says, "Okay, but I'm giving you a "Woo Woo."

"A who?" I ask.

I hear her repeat "a woo woo."

"Is that a car?" I ask, confused.

"What do you think?" she says, and then asks for my New York driver's license again, in a really nasty tone.

"It's a DAY WOO!" Fatass says smugly from behind the faux marble desk that's separating my fist from her face.

"What's that?" I ask, not knowing shit about cars these days.

"It's Korean," the Cartman bitch tells me, "and it probably won't make it up the mountains." Of course she snickers when she says that.

"Korea makes good VCRs," I tell Fatass, Wendy, and PJ, "so I'm sure their cars are fine."

She looks at us and our luggage and tells us that it won't fit in the car.

"Don't worry," I tell her, "I'm a pro."

Truth is, I am. After touring the country in Evan's grandfather's car with Furious George, my punk band, I can fit anything into a trunk. Guitars, amps, drum sets, underage girls and duct tape, you name it.

Even suitcases.

An hour later we find ourselves on a car rental airport transportation bus with Wendy's stepmom, and her suitcase that's big enough to fit Evan's car in.

As we make our way out of the airport, the driver pulls over to pick up one more passenger who just radioed him. And surprise, it's Fatass.

As soon as she wobbles up the bus stairs she sees us and our suitcases, she lets out a chuckle.

"Ain't no way all that's gonna fit in a Daewoo," she says happily. It is spelled "D-a-e-w-o-o." I later checked the car's logo to make sure.

Wendy and I, both in shock at her comment, say nothing, but PJ barks from inside his black Sherpa bag, where he'd been hiding quietly.

"I hear a dog!" Fatass yells.

Wendy and I just look at one another. Then at Wendy's stepmom. She, in turn, just looks at the two other passengers, then Fatass.

Once again Fatass yells, "I hear a dog!"

PJ, of course, responds to this by barking louder.

"See," she yells to anyone who will listen, "I told you I heard a dog!"

We all look at her like she's nuts, so she just stares back at us and once again tells us there is no way a Daewoo will make it up to Estes Park.

"Should've gotten that midsize," she mutters to herself and the bus driver.

At this point, and seeing how I was in Colorado, I was about to pull a Stan or Kyle on her by calling her every filthy name in the book. But Wendy covered my mouth, and eventually, we all reached our destination. The car rental garage.

There we got our Daewoo, where we *easily* packed in all the bags with room to spare.

And my only complaint about the Korean car was the the clock kept blinking 12 am....

*

A day and a half later we found ourselves in Estes Park, Colorado. After helping her stepmom finish unloading *all* her baggage, both physical and emotional, we made our way to our hotel. Actually, motel.

The Hobby Horse.

As we looked around for the pet-friendly palace, we were greeted by these big brown objects that weighed over a thousand pounds, had four legs, and ate golf-courses.

"They look like horses with antlers," I told Wendy as we drove past about a hundred or so of them. Each, much bigger than our VCR car.

"They look like PJ," she exclaimed, "only much bigger!"

Women. Everything reminds them of their kids.

"They could be deer," I tell her, as the cold mountain air blows across my face, and I smell snow in the air. What little of it there is.

After checking into our motel, and PJ finding *his* chair in the room, we decide to take a walk to find out just what exactly the huge animals are.

We walk toward a duck pond and golf course near the motel that's full of them. As we approach, with PJ pulling the way on his leash, growling at the animals over 100 times his weight, we spot two little girls playing on a swingset.

"Excuse me," I say to the two young 'uns, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Sure, Mister," they say to me with their nearly toothless smiles. I hate when they call me Mister. But the teeth thing doesn't bother me.

"Just what exactly are those things?" I say as I point to one of the large brown animals eating weeds in front of a trailer park home.

"Those are our houses," she tells me.

Surprised, I just point to the large brown animals that are now walking toward a tree.

"That's a tree," one of the little girls tells me, "T-R-E-E!"

"That's good," I tell her, "But I'm talking about those, *those* animals!"

"Oh" she says, looking at me like I'm a retard, "That's an elk."

"An elk?" I ask, and suddenly break out laughing.

"What's so funny?" asks Wendy.

"Anne Elk," I tell her.

She doesn't get it. Then again, she hated the movie *Brazil*. I think the whole Monty Python thing is only for guys. Pussy guys, of course.

I then continue the conversation with the little girls.

"So those things just walk around wherever they want?" I ask.

"Yeah," one of the girls tells me, "they come down from the mountains when they are hungry."

"But they're huge," I say, "aren't you afraid of them?"

"Why?" she asks.

I tell her that they are *huge*, and beside the fact that they may bite, they have *big* horns on their heads.

"Those are called 'antlers' she tells me, smugly.

I thank her for her information and Wendy and PJ and I walk toward the herd of elk to check them out a bit more. As we do, they all stand still and each one of them focus their eyes upon us.

"I don't think this is such a good idea," Wendy says.

"Sure it is," I tell her, "They're just overgrown deer. In fact, they look like reindeer. I bet they're really nice. Like Rudolph, Prancer, Dancer, and Flasher."

"Flasher?" Wendy asks.

"Vixen, whatever," I tell her.

As we approached the elk, PJ suddenly starts to shy away, no longer barking, almost whimpering.

"Pussy," I say to my nine-pound Yorkie as we start to make our way across a small wooden bridge to where a very large elk stands, with even larger antlers. His dead black eyes are fixed upon me and my dog.

"George," Wendy whispers loudly, "please don't go near it, it looks angry!"

I tell her she doesn't know what she's talking about.

About seven feet from Anne Elk, PJ and I stop. I do notice that it's large in the front, even larger in the middle, then large again at the end.

"Hi," I say to the animal, waving at it like I do to dogs on the streets of New York all the time.

It just stares at me with its cold, black eyes.

"I'm from New York and were just visiting," I explain to the elk.

Silence.

"Anyway," I say to the animal, "I was just wondering if me and my pal, PJ, here, could come up and perhaps pet you?

Suddenly the elk put its head down and aimed its antlers right for my chest.

"Is that a no?" I ask.

Meanwhile, PJ is on the ground and pulling toward the motel as fast as he can.

"George..." exclaims Wendy, but she doesn't get to finish.

Suddenly the elk throws its head in the air and lets out the most bloodcurdling scream I have ever heard. It sounds like a cross between Janet Leigh in the shower and me after my doctor lubes up his rubber glove.

"Time to go," I say to Wendy and PJ as I quickly back up, black, cold eyes, watching me very closely.

At first we walk away slowly. Then a bit quicker. Eventually we run.

We step in piles of elk shit but we don't care.

Later we're told it's mating season, and we're lucky it didn't try to "butt heads" with me over Wendy.

Lucky is right. I'd have kicked its ass.

*

On the last morning of our visit to Colorado, I leave our room at The Hobby Horse to start up the Daewoo. As the clock blinks 12 am, I notice the digital thermometer reads 17 degrees. I look around and still see plenty of elk. I figured they'd be there. They'd spent the whole night before screeching at the top of their lungs, which in turn, made PJ screech on the top of his lungs, which in turn made me screech at the top of my lungs, which in turn, made Wendy screech at the top of her lungs. At me.

As we left Estes Park, and waved goodbye to our four-legged friends, walking down the middle of the main streets of the town, I felt a tang of sadness. I'll miss their four legs, thousand pounds of power, and their cold, black eyes. As we continued to drive I noticed lots of them crossing the town's main streets, ignoring the "walk" and "don't walk" signs.

In fact, I almost hit one because of the morning fog.

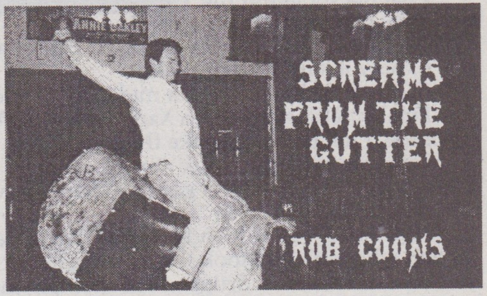
"Fucking animals," I yell, "can't they fucking read?"

Then I remember Fatass and the fact that I'm in Colorado. Maybe I was being too harsh. After all, this isn't Floriduh.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. www.georgetabb.com
2. Dean Dean And The Sex Machines are the next big thing, next to my penis, that is!
3. I gotta admit, hearing Tim's voice on the new *MRR* radio show, available at this magazine's website, gave me goosebumps and also made me smile with warm memories. I miss ya, Timmy!



This past month saw the almighty NUNSLAUGHTER come out to the West Coast for a short tour, and they brought us a taste of their Midwestern metal mayhem. Though they played a few shows in the Bay Area, I unfortunately only got to see one of them. I went to their Gilman show and they tore through one song after another of great thrashing metal. And in between songs, the drummer went into great spooky character voices and did things like encourage the crowd to bring him the heads of Christians. They were not only good, but absolutely hilarious, raising the cheese factor as much as they could. They ended their set by tossing a few dead rats into the crowd and the people went nuts tossing the rats at each other and back at the band. If there was ever a way to stir a crowd, I would have to say that throwing dead things at them ranks near the top.

Now I have seen a couple of bands throw dead animals at their audience, but probably one of my favorite moments was at a show at Gilman many years ago. My memory fails me at this point, but I am pretty sure it was ASBESTOS DEATH, who at the end of their set encouraged the crowd to gather around for a free giveaway. So everybody gathered around and the band tossed a garbage bag into the middle of the crowd. People tore into the bag and immediately started screaming in disgust. Somebody picked the bag up and gave it a flip and what looked like a opossum came flying out and flopped on the floor. Keep in mind, this was no ordinary opossum, but a stinking vile dead opossum. So it lay there on the floor for a while stinking up the place, until one of the trusty Gilman workers came up with a broom and a dustpan and swept the little bugger right up and into a trashcan. It left a nice wet stain on the floor and a rotting stink in the room for a while, but I guess we can always count on those Gilman volunteers to step up to the plate when needed.

You know, in many ways the Bay Area has one of the most privileged punk scenes around. We have record stores, bookstores, venues, political groups and much, much more. But I often wonder where would we be without the almighty "List." What is the "List", you ask? It is an free, up-to-date comprehensive listing of almost all the live shows in the Bay Area worth mentioning. Imagine having a handy show listing at your fingertips at all times. Not only does it come in a printed form, but it is online as well. (Check out one of the List websites at http://jon.luini.com/thelist/ or contact him at The List, PO Box 2451, Richmond, CA 94802.) Steve Koepke has been doing the List since at least 1994 and possibly even earlier. Plus, he is found at many shows handing out copies of the List to a multitude of begging hands. I know people really appreciate having the List around, but I think we forget the effort that it takes to get it all together. So a huge thanks goes out to Steve and anybody involved in keeping this Bay Area treasure alive!

IRON LUNG - *Comedy Hour Live* Cassette: Since I have seen IRON LUNG a couple of times, I was interested to hear this live recording to see if it could capture their mix of intensity and humor when they play in front of an audience, especially considering I was at the show this was recorded at. After only two songs into it, I definitely felt that it lived up to my expectations. If you have never heard IRON LUNG, they are a two-piece outfit that create a mess of full-on thrashing grind that is packed with throbbing tempos and crazed time changes. When they play, IRON LUNG always has funny interactions with the crowd and you can hear that clearly on this release. This cassette comes in a fancy little case and if you are a fan you should definitely check it out. It is limited to 100 copies. (Enterruption, PO Box 884626, San Francisco, CA 94188-4626; enterruption.com)

FALL TIME - *Coma* CD: There is nothing like getting a release from a band and label that you have never heard of and having it royally kick your ass. FALL TIME create mammoth songs full of dark throbbing soundscapes that bulldoze their way into your eardrums. The songs on here are slow and long with more than half of them clocking in at more than ten minutes. A lot of the time they let the music stand on its own by continually building with long instrumental passages. But when the vocals kick in, there is no mistaking their power with that deep growling voice that sounds wretched and full of anger. Plus the production is clean, powerful and top notch. If you are a fan of bands like ISIS and CULT OF LUNA then do yourself a favor and seek this CD out. (FireWalk With Me, PO Box 65, 1110 Wien, AUSTRIA)

BLESSING THE HOGS - *The Poisoning* CD: From what information I can gather, it appears that this is a reissue of their self-released CD from a few years back, which I actually reviewed here in this column. This time around it has new cover art and contains four new tracks (including two covers). In case you do not know, BLESSING THE HOGS are from the San Francisco area and kick down some serious metalcore. While the pace of this music is pretty slow, the heavy-duty riffs and time changes keep your interest peaked throughout most of the songs. What really did it for me here is the incredibly heavy production. Jesus, the guitars in "Rototiller" sound like they are going to crush your stereo speakers. The only thing I did not like about this release were the cover songs that they did. They butchered some classic punk songs by the CRUCIFIX and MEATMEN. The covers were so bad they almost blew the rest of the record for me. Rumor has it their new release will be coming out on Prosthetic Records, which is a division of Metal Blade. Guess they won't be getting reviews in this magazine anymore. (Goodfellow, 432 Upper James Street, Suite 275, Hamilton, Ontario, L9C3A2 CANADA)

SILBATO - *Knock* CD: SILBATO, from Italy, wastes no time and jumps right into seven songs of quality metal-tinged emo. The musical pace is really hectic, as it mixes together wildly jarring drumming and spastic rhythm changes. Between the tight clinking sound of the guitar and the deep breathless grasps of pain and anger that pass for vocals, this band has a quality release nailed. On the song "Zero Is The Key" they back off the hard edge of their music for something a little more melodic, and on the last song they sped the pace up pretty nicely. It was nice to see some variation in the music. Check this one out. (Silbato, c/o Giuseppe Di Paola, Via Buzzola 9. 30174, Mestre. Venezia, ITALY; silbato@ironmaiden .com)

NARZISS - *Die Hoffnung Stirbt Zuletzt* CD: If you like the current crop of metal/hardcore coming out of Germany then this should be right up your alley. NARZISS play mostly mid-tempo metal with an occasional melodic moment or fast part. The vocals are so harsh and grating that I thought it was a female for a while, but it turned out not to be. All the vocals are screamed out in German, but English translations are included in the CD. The production is fairly solid, but it sounds a bit thin compared to many of the recordings that I hear in this genre these days. This band definitely follows the path of others like HEAVEN SHALL BURN and CALIBAN, so check them out if that is your thing. (Per Koro, Postfach 102514, 28025 Bremen, GERMANY; perkoro.de)

BOTCH - *An Anthology Of Dead Ends* CD: I know this has been out for a while, but I definitely feel this deserves a mention here. Damn, it kind of breaks my heart to review this release, knowing it will be the last one from of my favorite bands ever. Anybody who has read my column knows how much I like this band. I have drove all over the state of California on multiple occasions to see them live and have listened to their records more times than I could possibly count. Anyway, they close their chapter as a band out with these five songs of musical madness. BOTCH takes their lethal combination of metal, hardcore, and emo and crunch it all together into yet another original masterpiece. It is all here: surging rhythms, complex guitar playing, wild time changes, crushing breakdowns, powerful vocals. Jeez, they were in a class in their own! This "enhanced" CD comes with some additional stuff, including some photos and a short video. This is a damn fine release and if you haven't already got it then you better get to crackin'. (Hydra Head, PO Box 990248, Boston, MA 02199; hydrahead.com)

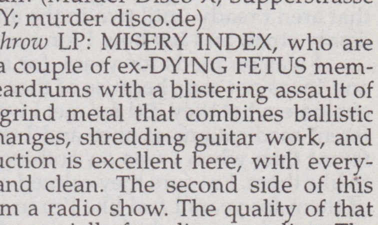
DEAD FOR A MINUTE/DESIDERATA - split EP: DEAD FOR A MINUTE, who are from France, take a mix of metal and screamo and create a cacophony of noise. The music takes a crazed pace, with lots of choppy time and style changes. The lyrics are all in French, so I obviously don't know what they are screaming so passionately about. On the opposite side of the split, DESIDERATA, from Luxembourg, follow DEAD FOR A MINUTE down a similar path of musical destruction. One minute they will be strumming through some nice melody and the next they will unleash a harsh in-your-face mess of grinding screamo matched up with forced screaming vocals. This was a lot better than I expected it to be, so be damn sure to check it out if you are into brutal screamo! (Acide Folik, Thierry Thomassin, Musique Et Lecture, Subversive, BP 90007, 54002 Nancy Cedex, FRANCE; acidefolik@hotmail.com)

MURDER DISCO X - *Supercrust* EP: I know this got reviewed a few issues back in *MRR*, but they recently sent me a copy, so here we go. MURDER DISCO X from GERMANY is a four-piece that includes one of the guys from SEVERED HEAD OF STATE. (As a side note, it should be mentioned that SEVERED HEAD OF STATE are doing a European tour soon, so be on the lookout) The music is ripping fast punk that is packed with lots of catchy breaks and great pissed-off vocals. The production is great and you can hear everything very clearly. Their lyrics seem to be pretty straightforward, going after things like poser bands, cell phones, and war. These guys are bound to start a circle pit frenzy in a town near you. Killer stuff! (Murder Disco X, Supperstrasse 3, 70565 Stuttgart, GERMANY; murder disco.de)

MISERY INDEX - *Overthrow* LP: MISERY INDEX, who are from Maryland and contain a couple of ex-DYING FETUS members, wreaked havoc on my eardrums with a blistering assault of metal. This is brutal death/grind metal that combines ballistic drumming, tons of tempo changes, shredding guitar work, and punishing vocals. The production is excellent here, with everything sounding very crisp and clean. The second side of this record is a live recording from a radio show. The quality of that recording is excellent as well, especially for a live recording. The lyrical content was a surprising mix of well thought-out anti-political and anti-religious tirades. Another thing to note was a list of websites that the band recommended which included akpress.org. That was a refreshing surprise to see that listing, especially in a metal record. Nevertheless I was doing a little research on this band and I found out they will be jumping the indie ship as well and moving on to Nuclear Blast. Seems to be par for the course of many metal bands these days. (SoulReaper, PO Box 90, 8500 Kortrijk, BELGIUM; goodliferecordings.com)

"I love punk I love thrash. Stick that lame shit up your ass. No borders to friends of fucked up sounds. A network that lasts through the trends. Smell of booze in the air. Laughter rings out everywhere."

Hellnation: "I Love Punk I Love Thrash"



Tomorrow, If I haven't lost my mind
I'll beg and borrow all the words I can't define.
——J-Church

My judgment is off. I am trying to sort of lay low right now, and I'm not very good at it. There were all these kids here from down South and the last of them took off last week; it's like summer finally ended in the end of December. It's a little more empty around town and I decided I'd lock myself in my room and read, alphabetically, all the books on my bookshelves I haven't read yet or that I need to read again. But really I've spent the weekend just throwing stuff out or into the bottom of my housemate's enormous closet.

I have this organ that I bought for seven dollars three years ago from some circus guy. He was moving to New York City to be a writer. My housemate wants me to move it so she can set up a sewing machine she doesn't use enough in that corner. I live with the remnants of all of my unfinished projects, the old clothes of every stupid heartbreak.

It's a bitch to spend your whole life wracked with doubt. I was flying home from my parents' house a couple weeks ago. I was reading a beauty magazine for the first time in years. In middle of articles like "Why Your Man Loves the Part Of Your Body You Hate the Most!" and "You Best Orgasm Ever!" I took some quiz about adult ADHD, you know, what they call, in children, "hyperactivity." I said yes to ten out of ten questions, questions like, "Do you live your life in piles—moving things around rather than putting them away?" It's humiliating, being understood by *Marie Claire.* I'll be 26 by the time this goes to print, and I was diagnosed as a hyperactive child when I was three and a half, or at least that was when I was evaluated for the first time, at the request of my preschool. This was back when it was really unusual for a little girl to get that sort of diagnosis. I wasn't on meds until I was older, and I haven't been for years. But this past week I have been staring at the piles of disorganized books, unwritten letters, and general incoherence that fills my little blue room. And I have to wonder if I'm being stubborn and ruining my life. Nothing seems to get done. I haven't made more copies of my old fanzine because then I'd have to give them to people I respect. Projects get started and then everything just seems so pointless; I'm overcome with the limitations of my abilities and the reality of the world we've been given. I start to wonder if maybe there is some simple chemical formula that could fine-tune my personality, make it functional.

It sounds dramatic, but being ruled by chemicals that someone measured out wrong can make you act dramatic, make you talk too loud and pick fights at parties, make huge breakfasts that aren't ready until two in the afternoon. It's artificial, unnecessary stress and it's how I force myself to operate.

I was on meds for years, for a variety of vague diagnoses, and I was not sane because of them. It was impossible for me to evaluate what they did for me; I was always on three to five different medications at once and I couldn't really tell if I felt different than when I was on nothing at all. Other people seemed to like them. I'm sure they calmed me down. But having been off of them for years I feel like I'm in much better shape, more balanced and in control of my anger. But when I get depressed it's hard for me to see clearly, and I consider options that are ideologically and politically incompatible with my life. And then I wonder if it's like when I was younger and I used to politicize sex and make myself feel like shit for wanting things that I thought I shouldn't. Maybe if I started taking meds again I wouldn't be conforming to society's norms around behavior. Maybe it has nothing to do with that and something to do with clearing obstacles.

I haven't played my goddamn bass in months. I have this organ, these toy keyboards, all these weird useless instruments, half-broken and pointless, scattered all over my apartment. I had roller skates in my closet, and an extra bike that was borrowed from a friend, and a flat tire on my real bike that I can't make myself take care of 'cause there are other ways to get around. All these distractions. It makes me feel like I am utterly missing the point; if I got rid of all of the excess maybe the really important things would be manageable, the other options wouldn't be able to distract me.

But of course I like the clutter, the millions of small shiny objects I have covered my walls with, the odd pieces of paper I collect in my pockets and then try to piece together the meaning of, the next week, drinking coffee in someone's kitchen with the contents of my bag rudely piled on their kitchen table. "Where did I find this?" I'll ask, and my friend will ignore me, annoyed. I like junk, I like all of the possible adventures I have stuck in different corners. I'm always trying to salvage the inherent glamor of the small things; I have a old microphone that requires an adapter that they don't make anymore. It is baby blue and it was created to sit on your desk, like maybe if you were a business man asking your secretary for a coffee with cream and no sugar. I like the microphone, but it is useless. Maybe one afternoon I could try to rewire it, but it'll probably be pretty much a prop for the rest of its life. It's in the hall outside my bedroom door now. I'm not sure if I'll keep it or not. The organ and even the toy Casios, which I really liked taking to protests, are also gonna be gone.

But calm doesn't calm me. I clash with calm. A tasteful white room just makes me all that much more aware of the chaotic sickness that is in me, that is in all of us, the doubt and the vanity that distracts us and forces us to ask the really serious questions, like what the fuck am I doing? I make decisions about my life in middle of hangovers. There is nothing like too much whiskey and too little water to make you spend an entire Sunday wondering how you became the person you are, why you are attracted to the people you are attracted to, and why you let yourself waste so much fucking time. I'm not hungover, but I was last Wednesday. My judgment is failing and it's getting public, so I am rethinking things.

Unlisted Tracks:

Rip Joe Strummer. 2002 was a hard fucking year for punk rock.

How do you balance being sexually independent with treating other girls with total respect? Like to refuse to play out weird competition roles, and to not emulate the male dominance/female submission dichotomy in girl-to-girl relationships? 'Cause I still can't figure it out. It sucks when the things that piss you off also turn you on.

Portland rains too much. Don't move there. Move to San Francisco. Unless you are an asshole. Then move to Phoenix.

I'm reading Harold Norse's *Memoirs of a Bastard Angel.* I am such a sucker for a good title and a pretty cover. Harold Norse was a writer in Greenwich Village in the 40s, and in Paris in the 60s. He was friends with James Baldwin and other famous writers. The book's kind of trashy, but fun and well-written. He outs all these literary types. "We stared at Auden, whose attention we wished to attract, but he was engaged in conversation." Kill me.

If you have a letter about my column, send it to *MRR*. If you want to write me, or send me something you made, write: Kat Case, PO Box 401160, San Francisco, CA 94140.

FELIX HAVOC
FIN DE SIECLE ANGST

I was truly saddened to hear about the death of Joe Strummer. I was always much more into the Clash than the Pistols, Ramones or any other early punk bands. As Mark P. once said in *Sniffin' Glue,* "the Clash tells the truth." I don't care what anyone says, the Clash were *the* early punk band for me. They had the music, the look, the songs, the sound, and the radical social political stance all in one.

Thrash Fest 4 went down in Minneapolis Dec 29. It was a totally crucial blowout. DS 13 played their last show ever. Limp Wrist, Holding On, Tear It Up, Path of Destruction, Any Last Words, Damage Deposit, and Guns, Liquor, Whores also unleashed some hardcore devastation on the 600 kids who showed up.

Then I woke up the next morning to the cold, hard truth. Life without DS 13. What do you do when your favorite band breaks up? I tried to reason with myself: "I still have Tear It Up," but the sinking feeling wouldn't leave me. It's been a few weeks now and I'm beginning to adjust.

As depressing as these events may be, punk rock soldiers on. Joe Strummer might be dead, but there are millions of his records, words, and music around the world now. Old heads from '77 can spin those records years from now and wax nostalgic. Meanwhile young kids can pick up the same records and discover a whole new world of music and ideas that they didn't know existed. Joe may be gone, but what he helped get started continues to grow. Look at Luk Haas's recent discography of

Asian Punk, http://tam89records.0catch.com/. We see that punk has spread to places like Nepal and Brunei and will continue to spread. Old punks might die, bands might break up, but this is *not over yet.*

ANONYMOUS BOY

I thought I'd take a break from my usual rants regarding homosexuality to ponder how war, bombs, guns, killing, tanks, planes, and land mines are yucky icky-poo! In today's warmongering world, what is a peacenik punk rocker to do? Why not become like me? No, I don't mean become *gay* so you can avoid the draft, I mean become a fanatical record collector. Then, you can sit shivering at home, listening to some war and military themed punk songs, such as:

"Stolen Youth," by DEADLINE, from *Flex Your Head* compilation, LP/CD Dischord Records, 1982. This is my all-time favorite. Over the menacing grind of this slow-to-mid-tempo tune, the singer shouts "Promised you they'd make you a man/ young and bored—you didn't understand/ but you didn't believe us/ you needed proof, now they stole two years of your youth/ and now you're a man, spent your youth on the run/ it's too late now, you missed all the fun/ they stole your youth." Those lyrics perfectly express what I think about the kids who enlist in the military. It's true that some "boys" sign up because they are anxious to "become men," but not me. You get there soon enough without speeding up the process by deliberately exposing yourself to the mind-warping horrors of war. No matter how old I am, or how old I get, I'd rather have fun and be a kid, wouldn't you? Considering how emotionally scarred most "men" are who come back from war, (not to mention the weird physical maladies like Gulf-War Syndrome) I think it's wise to take DEADLINE's advice and avoid a stolen youth.

"Rockets and Bombs," by the STILETTO BOYS, from *Rockets and Bombs* CD, TSB Records and *Fistful of Rock-n-Roll* Volume 4, Tee Pee Records 2000. A nifty pop punk ditty about (what else?) rockets, bombs, and chemical weapons. This one could almost be a theme song for the UN Weapons Inspectors because it has a repeated chorus that goes; "Can't ya show me around? Can't you show me a-rowwwwnd!"

"Military Fairy," by RHYTHM PIGS, from *I Can Fly* EP, Unclean Records, 1983? A cool tune about gays in the military and what often happens to them as a result of a fellow soldiers' homophobia. It concludes, "Daddy's just as proud as he can be/ his only boy is in the military cemetery."

"Tank," by the STRANGLERS, from *Black and White* LP, United Artists, 1978. This one really *sounds* like a lumbering tank. It's complete with the sound effects of the armored vehicle firing off its big gun. It's one of the Strangler's all-time best tunes, with a roaring bass and cool guitar line that distinctly suggests the feeling of a tank. It's a great song to play while driving a car on a freeway because something about the way the music grooves sort of makes you actually feel as if you're driving a speeding tank.

"Fight War, Not Wars," by ANTI, from *I Don't Want to Die in Your War* LP, New Underground Records, 198? This medium tempo hardcore tune is kinda funny and charming for its direct and simple message. That's all because of Bert, the lead vocalist, who screams the bluntly obvious lyrics; "Fight War! / Not Wars! / Because. . . . . / You'll DIIIEEE!!!!!"

"Kamikaze Attack," by the ZODIAC KILLERS, from *Have a Blast!* LP, Rip Off Records, 2000. Another terrific, pure punk rock anthem like all of the Rip Off bands do so well. This one is introduced by the scary sound effect of a crashing Kamikaze plane, followed immediately by squadron-of-planes-like guitar playing and an unbelievably catchy chorus.

"Phosphorous and Napalm," by CINECYDE, from *Detroit Defaces The 80s* compilation LP and *Positive Action* 7" EP, Tremor Records, 1979. Gary Reichel, the singer of this late 70s/early 80s band from Detroit, has a vocal quality similar to Johnny Puke from Cletus. In addition, they have a very original guitar sound. In my opinion, though, the really exciting aspect of this particular song comes from how the drums punch out the rhythm of the lyrics, "Phosphorous and napalm are such FUN, FUN, FUN, FUN, / I like to shoot people with my GUN, GUN, GUN, GUN!" This one is *totally* great and it sort of sounds inspired by "Search and Destroy" by the Stooges.

"Bomb Scare," by SARDONICA, from *Biker* 7" single, Mutant Punk Label, 1994. Over a galloping guitar and precision drumming with a dramatic punk rock musical arrangement and unexpected mock-reggae breaks, this comes complete with the sound effects of a ticking bomb and a wailing siren. It ends abruptly.

"G.I. Sex," by FANG, from *Where The Wild Things Are* LP, Boner Records 1983. A militaristic drum roll commands our attention and is followed by a marching song styled chorus, "We are the boys, we are the boys, with machine guns. / We fight the wars, we fight the wars, for freedom." But what's *really* on the G.I.'s mind becomes evident by the middle of the song when lead singer Sammytown sings, "Why can't I make love to you? / Make love to me. / I'm a G.I. / In uniform." I don't know. Sounds like the message of this one is make love not war. What do you think?

"Soldier Boy," by MORAL CRUX, from *And Nothing But The Truth* CD, Coldfront Records, 2001. This song has guitar reminiscent of early rock'n'roll as filtered through the song "I Don't Care" by the late 70s English punk band the Boys. The singer exclaims; "Soldier boy, blown to bits for the president's image!" The lovely, harmonized vocals at the conclusion of the song where the band sings, "Soldier boy, my little soldier boy," could almost make this an answer to The Shirelles' number one hit song from 1962 with the same title.

"Praise The Lord, And Pass The Ammunition," by (IMPATIENT) YOUTH, from *Maximum Rocknroll Presents Not So Quiet on the Western Front* LP, Alternative Tentacles 1982. The war-as-religious-experience aspect of the song is given a melodic punk rock treatment complete with a harmonized church hymn inspired chorus and backing vocal "Ah-Ahh Ahhs" behind the verses.

"Combat Love," by SHRAPNEL, from 7" single. Salute Records 1979. This CBGB scene band used the army as their whole image. They were the first band in punk that I knew to wear helmets and army fatigues *before* the Clash, (they didn't pick up on that until the 80s) and they even had a little toy tank that they would drive around in on stage! They were the living G.I. Joe dolls of punk rock. "Combat Love" is one of their better military themed songs. A great pop punk artifact form the 70s New York punk scene.

"Army Song," by ABRASIVE WHEELS, from their debut three-song EP on Abrasive Records and the *Punk And Disorderly* compilation LP on Abstract/Posh Boy 1982. This English band's song about the Army is notable for its campy inclusion of the "We want you as a new recruit" chant from the Village People's disco hit "In The Navy." Too bad they couldn't get their branches of the military straight. Navy? Army? Navy? Army? Anyway, I can't understand a single word that lead singer Shonna is singing, so I have no idea what he's going on about.

The DEAD KENNEDYS have a number of war and terrorism songs such as "Bleed For Me," "Kill The Poor," "When Ya Get Drafted," "I Am The Owl," and "Chemical Warfare," but I feel that the album version of "Holiday in Cambodia" from *Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables*—1981, Cherry Red/IRS/Faulty Products-Alternative Tentacles—is probably the best and scariest. It has astonishing guitar by East Bay Ray and a tension-filled musical arrangement that really dramatizes a terrifying war. You can hear bombs exploding and fires burning in your imagination without any sound effects whatsoever. It's all there in how the music sounds.

"Missile Destroyed Civilization," by MDC, from *Smoke Signals* LP, R Radical Records, 1986. "The war machine masters, their profits will abound, they'll own it all some day, with no one left around, They'll leave our blue-green planet, all burnt and smoky brown." 'Nuff said.

"The Few, The Proud," by NEGATIVE F/X, from their self-titled debut LP, 1982. Lifted from the Marines' recruitment slogan, this one, like all Negative F/X's songs on the record, is played at breakneck hardcore speed. The lyrics are screamed too fast to decipher—however, there's just enough clarity in the breaks for you to be able to make out the band screaming "Fight a War!"

"War Ensemble," by WARPATH, from Warpath/Population Control split 7" EP, Warfear Collective, 1994. "U.$. Intervention / A bloody decision / War over oil / Lives for dollars / Slaughter children / For votes at home / War over oil / What a farce. / Innocent Iraqis / Battered and slaughtered / It's all about power / War, Murder, Genocide." My, my. Isn't it interesting how this one reveals that history does indeed repeat itself?

"Dutchmen," by RUDIMENTARY PENI, from *Death Church* LP, 1983. An interesting history lesson in this band's usual off-kilter style, about the endless circle of violence that one nation of people will inflict upon another, as justified by "moral law." Interesting and perceptive.

"Plate In My Head," by the DIDJITS, from *Hey Judester* LP, Touch and Go Records, 1988. Sung from the perspective of a Vietnam vet, the complete chorus goes; "I got a plate in my head from Vietnam." The song was inspired by a comment heard by the band at a party and is notable for its infectious melody and touch of bitter humor.

"Tin Soldiers," by STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, from *Nobody's Heros* LP, Chrysalis Records, 1979. The great sing-along title chorus is backed by militaristic drum rolls on this rather long but, good song. My favorite part is when the singer repeats; "Hup, two, three, four," over and over again, starting out low and then steadily building to an angry shout, right before the guitar solo part. Cool.

"I Hope You Get Drafted," by the DICKS, from *P.E.A.C.E.* compilation double LP, R.Radical Records, 1984. According to the booklet that came with this record, this song was written in a restaurant after someone in the band (Gary?) overheard high school kids at the next table laughing and talking with pleasure about the military takeover of Grenada being a "neat" thing. The lyrics; "I hope you get drafted, I hope you carry a gun. When you come back with no arms or legs, then you can say war is fun" were the reaction to the overheard conversation.

"For The Glory," by the TRUENTS, from Truents/Suburban Crisis split 7" EP, Guillotine Records, 1999. The song is in latter-day English punk style but the band are Yanks. It is introduced by high-pitched and shrill guitar notes followed by lead vocalist Shaun's flat and strained vocals which veer dangerously off-key at times. The lyrics begin with what sounds like a list of reasons why one would be in favor of war— "The Prez told the UN to send them in." "We'll blow 'em away." "Nato will keep you free." "We won't lose too many warplanes." Ultimately, however the song advised against the United States involvement in Kosovo's "religious war."

"Hiroshima," by DIRT, from *Object Refuse Reject Abuse* EP, Crass Records, 1981. Cute alternating girl/boy vocals against the backdrop of a Crass-inspired instrumental backing. This one isn't exactly *about* war or the Hiroshima bomb, but is more like a general anti-nuke song which uses what happened at Hiroshima as a reason to be "in constant fear" because "it's only a matter of time before it happens here." A song that is really more about nuclear war is:

"We Want Nuclear War," by ARTLESS, from self-titled album, Placebo Records, 1985. In early hardcore punk style, Mykel Board rants pessimistically about the self-destructive desire of human nature using his own unique brand of ironic wit. It has an awkward, funny chorus that sounds to me like Mykel is being backed up by the Chipmunks.

"Welcome Home," by SEVENTYEIGHTDAYS, from the *Revolution Through Anonymity* EP, 1998. This features somber lyrics about welcoming home a dead soldier. It concludes; "He was buried in a ribbon. Welcome home." Vocalist Chris Logan alternates between screaming his balls off and whimpering weakly like a broken, dejected child. Meanwhile crunch guitar rages powerfully.

"Sacrifice," by FLIPPER, from *Sex Bomb Baby* LP Subterranean Records, and *Maximum Rocknroll Presents Not So Quiet On The Western Front*, Alternative Tentacles, 1982 (there's also an alternate version on Flipper's *Gone Fishin'* LP, released the same year). Over the band's amazing characteristic plodding, slug-drone, an agonized Bruce Lose torturously screams dare I say *poetic* (almost biblical sounding) lyrics regarding the terrors of warfare and the "*cattle*"*-like* masses who "demand a sacrifice / crying tears of pride / for the maimed, the dying, and the dead." One of the most intense and brooding songs about war ever recorded.

Lots of bands have done great songs about The Neutron Bomb, some of the best known being by the WEIRDOS, the CONTROLLERS, and the ART ATTACKS.

Finally—"Commando" by the RAMONES, from *Leave Home*, Sire Records, 1976, also available on a number of Ramones compilations and live records. George Tabb would certainly lob hand-grenades at me if I neglected to mention this one! I love this song. It's actually an anti-war song, but don't tell that to Johnny, 'cuz I don't think he realizes it. "Commando! Involved again."

More Than Fashion

More Than the X's On My Hand

CARL CARDOVA

In the ten years that I have been reading this magazine, I never thought that I would actually be writing a music column for it. I *especially* didn't think I would be writing a column about straight edge hardcore. It's no surprise that the straight edge side of hardcore has been under represented in *MRR* for a few years (say like since 1982, when SSD was on the cover). I think a lot of kids want to blame this "schism" on the people that are in charge of running *MRR*. But I can assure you, it's not the coordinators' fault. Hell, Mike Thorn himself sports a most crucial edge tattoo, even if he does hide it under something black and several years unwashed. Mike and Arwen seem to think that all you finger-pointing, crew cut-wearing kids aren't getting a fair shake. That's where I come in. But before I start extolling the virtues of the edge in the pages of *MRR*, let me preface everything that I write from here on out by saying that *I am by no means an expert on straight edge hardcore.* I just happen to be one of the few that work at *MRR* that:

a) Is straight edge
b) Can stomach all the variants of the block letter font
c) Is very excited about the straight edge scene today

This column's main purpose is to share that excitement in hopes that some of it will rub off on some of you sober kids that have traded in that six-pack for a high speed internet connection and a thing called the *Rev Board*. This is a column about music, particularly music that associates itself with the straight edge hardcore scene. I want to showcase bands, labels, and publications that I feel are worthy of your attention. This is in hopes that straight edge kids around the world will once again get excited about contributing their hard work (recordings, zines, photographs, interviews, etc.) to one of the longest running punk magazines in the world. Some of you never left us; some of you are too young to even have been with us. Regardless, straight edge hardcore has been an integral part of this magazine since it's inception, and I don't want to see any of that fade away. Here is what you might not know about *MRR*:

Reviews

The most overheard complaint on why straight edge kids don't send in their zine/demo/7" is because they are afraid that it's going to get trashed. Some of it has to do with the fact that *MRR* is based out of San Francisco, which means that the people who do reviews for the magazine live somewhere in the Bay Area. Considering that the Bay Area has never had a strong straight edge scene, the magazine has never had a large pool of edge kids to draw from when they are looking for reviewers. Some are under the impression that the records are just given out randomly to reviewers. This is a false assumption. The records go to Tim Brooks first, who knows the particular tastes of each reviewer, and are therefore assigned to the appropriate reviewers. These reviewers will hopefully be open-minded and educated enough on the genre to recognize a good straight edge record when they hear one (even if they aren't particularly fond of breakdown mosh parts or chanted sing-alongs). On the other hand, your band/label might be getting trashed because of how you present your work and agenda. I think that most reviewers (straight edge or not) have a keen nose when it comes to sniffing out a band or zine's agenda (especially when their intentions are to become the next big thing at the expense of everyone else). Unfortunately a lot this bullshit propaganda and attitude is very prevalent in today's straight edge scene. Regardless, I certainly don't get all the straight edge records, nor do I like all the straight edge records that I get. Look at it this way: the more straight edge records/zines/demos that come in for review, the more likely another reviewer who likes that style of music will be brought on to fill the gap. If nothing else, don't forget that this zine has a massive monthly print run, and is distributed all over the world. Any press is good press. I personally mailordered many a classic straight edge record while living in Cincinnati, Ohio after reading "Another boring youth-crew rehash band" in the review pages of this zine.

Interviews

People say that *MRR* doesn't interview enough straight edge bands for them to pick it up. This one is so easy it hurts me to type it out. Get a tape recorder. Go to a show. Ask some questions. Type it out. Send it in. The end. Mike and Arwen are even good at tracking down photos if you don't have any. This is your fault, not ours.

Labels and Advertising

Surprised to see your release reviewed even though you never sent the record in? Someone here at *MRR* actually went out to the record store and purchased your release so that we could review it. See, we do care about your record, and your label. If you have a label, try taking out an ad in the magazine for a month or two. See what kind of response you get. It must be working for Youngblood Records; Joe and Sean have been taking out ads with us for a few years now. Some people don't think *MRR* is "crucial" enough to place an ad in. Grab an issue from the late 80s and tell me how many sick Schism, Revelation, and Wishing Well ads you see. Like I mentioned earlier, *MRR* distributes thousands of zines world wide every month. Relying on the *Rev Board* for advertising? You would be surprised at the fact that not everyone has a computer (gasp!), or the money for internet service. Maybe they're too busy buying records. Unfortunately, they aren't buying yours.

Vinyl Library

MRR prefers vinyl because *MRR* is committed to keeping the most comprehensive and up to date punk/hardcore library. This applies to vinyl only. If you only put out a CD, then send that in. But remember that when you send in a CD, the reviewer gets to keep it (and will most likely sell it back into obscurity). But if you send in the vinyl version, it will be filed and remain in the library for as long as *MRR* exists. Don't forget to send two copies! Then the reviewer can take a copy home with them rather than have to remain at *MRR* to review it (that way they get more time to actually listen to the record at their leisure). This may be too hard to fathom, but people might not give a shit about your cheesy straight edge band in 20 years. Nevertheless, to think that someone 20 years from now could walk down this library hall and pull out your band's 7" and see if it stood the test of time should blow your mind. *So send vinyl!* I cannot stress how fucking amazing this library is. They have almost every straight edge record ever. To be filed with such great classics like the *Chung King Can Suck It* LP, the Project X 7", or The Abused 7" would be an honor for any fan of great straight edge hardcore. Don't sell your bands contribution to your scene's history short. Represent your scene, and send in the vinyl version. Then we don't have to track it down for inflated eBay prices six months later.

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The Up and Comers

Has anybody seen FAR FROM BREAKING lately? This band has improved tenfold since I last saw them at Posi Numbers. This past Saturday (January 4, 2003) they opened up a show for DESPERATE MEASURES and STRIKING DISTANCE and they blew me out of the water. The same goes for their three-song CD that I picked up at said show. It contains some very solid tracks that are coming out on a Youngblood Records six song 7" later on this year. They still have a very distinct early CARRY ON influence, but these three songs are a lot better than the 7" I reviewed a few months back on Third Party Records. Pay attention to this band, because they are going to blow up. If you've got the internet, check out www.youngblood-records.com for pre-order info on the record. Otherwise, keep checking the ad section in this magazine for Youngblood Records updates. I am going down to San Jose to do an interview with them and DESPERATE MEASURES, so keep an eye open for those in future issues.

Another rad band making waves is Boston's MENTAL. After seeing them rip apart Pennsylvania at last year's Posi Numbers Fest, I ordered their demo a few weeks later. I was not disappointed. Imagine the fast ferocity of TEAR IT UP combined with some sweet breakdowns. And with song titles like "High School Sucks" and "Fuck Responsibility," these dudes definitely have have a youthful sense of humor. I heard a few MP3s off the new self-released *And You Know This* 7", and all I can say is that if you liked the demo, then you will definitely dig their debut. Order this record before you can't find it. You can make your order through paypal to danthraxxx@aol.com or send well concealed cash or money orders to Dan Ducas, 91 Gordon Street # 20, Brighton, MA 02135.

There are so many up and coming straight edge bands to check out right now, so stay tuned for next month's column. Send limited color vinyl and demos (after you've sent them to the magazine first!) to Carl "The Neck" Cordova, 800 Font Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94132 or email me at ih8thekids@hotmail.com.

MIKE TAYLOR WRITES PROPAGANDA SONGS!

Incidents surrounding and concerning the new year:

I-87, southbound: A newish model SUV burned to a charred husk is the answer to my silent question, "What's that black smoke?" The flames roared a red that I've only seen once before, when watching an apartment complex burn to the ground, framing a narcotic beauty against the stark standing monuments of two days of intense snow in upstate New York. Emergency vehicles arrive within minutes, and as we pass I see four shaken, but very much alive women standing on the shoulder, surrounded by firemen and state troopers.

Providence, RI: Mr. Brinkman tends to DJ duties at a lovely dance party in the neighborhood. Appearing to be under the influence of behavior-altering chemicals, he inserts noises into otherwise functional dance songs, rendering the music undanceable. Revelers are left confused, scratching their heads and shuffling their weight from one foot to another. The countdown to 2003 goes all but unnoticed.

Flashes of the entire vast scheme come only at the most unexpected times: while secreting away a box of my house's rice milk—a favorite of mine—for no reason at all I'm overtaken by a feeling of inexplicable graciousness. Rice milk is, oddly enough, a luxury. The taste moves me to think that the only way I can consistently afford it is through an understanding, conscientiously collective household (thanks, guys), and I feel at once calm and optimistic. I intensely enjoy such rare moments.

Joe Strummer died. In a very removed sense I suppose he has something to do with my life, but I guess I'll never know. On the whole, it's sad to see someone die at 50. But, people die. I'm sure at least 12 men of greater stature died that day in say, Botswana, but we react to what we know. Billy Bragg was quoted as saying something to the extent of, without Joe Strummer, punk's political edge would be much more dull. I guess it's true enough, but then again, as far as political relevance goes, Billy Bragg checked out way before Joe Strummer. Regardless, it's only a reminder of how rarely big rockers can succinctly illustrate a combatative position from within the colonizing culture. We need more thinkers and punks like him, in that regard.

I-95 South: A break from a particularly grueling 22-hour drive from Providence, RI to Gainesville, FL. pauses roadside for a makeout session in the backseat, the purchase of a massive cache of fireworks, and a coffee refill. The best—with the only possible exception being Palatka stranded in the mud and towed by a church van as our bass player wipes his ass in the woods with the only available paper, *MRR*, in 1995—punkest, pitstop of my life.

Winter Haven, FL: A slightly tipsy grandma rails against Jane Fonda, traitor bitch, over Christmas dinner. Big laffs, hardly stifled, all around.

Providence's first openly gay mayor was sworn in while I was away on Christmas vacation. I'm fairly ambivalent about his politics, but not altogether pessimistic. I can't shake the vision from my head of him at the pro-Israel rally at the capital months ago, foaming at the mouth in front of frolicking families about the importance of Providence's role in achieving a total Israeli state. Huh?

Just glimpses, I know. This is life in the fatherland.
Mike Taylor, PO Box 288226, Providence, RI 02908.
PS:by the time you read this, the new issue of *Scenery* should be out, if you're down.

Eleven days after September 11, 2001, Secretary of State Colin Powell promised to release proof that Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden were guilty of planning and executing the attacks on New York and Washington. "We will put before the world, the American people, a persuasive case that there will be no doubt when that case is presented that it is Al Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden, who has been responsible," Powell told ABC News.

National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice, speaking a few channels over, on CNN, echoed Powell's pledge. "Clearly we do have evidence, historical and otherwise, about the relationship to the Al Qaeda network to what happened on September 11," Rice said on Sept. 22nd. "We will begin to lay out that evidence and we will do it with friends, allies and the American people and others."

Afghanistan, along with Pakistan, had hosted Al Qaeda training camps. Al Qaeda, Bush said, had attacked us. So we bombed Afghanistan. The Bush Administration spent the next three months overseeing the dropping of explosives, killing an estimated 10,000 Taliban soldiers and at least 3,500 Afghan civilians. During the year since we installed a puppet ruler, Hamid Karzai, as interim Afghan president, at least 36 American soldiers have lost their lives defending Karzai's fragile regime.

So where's Rice's "evidence, historical and otherwise," confirming that Al Qaeda carried out 9/11? Where is Powell's "persuasive case?" The Bushies, as usual, are keeping mum. We, the American people, have yet to see the slightest shred of evidence tying Osama bin Laden, Mullah Omar, Michael Jackson, or the Easter Bunny to the attacks.

Fifteen months and still no proof! There are only three logical explanations for Bush's failure to produce the goods:

Al Qaeda and the Taliban had nothing to do with 9/11. Possible, but unlikely. Who else would have done it?

What with the war and all, the Bushies simply forgot to write up a report. Impossible. If proof existed, the Administration would have released it to make people like me shut up.

The evidence is circumstantial at best. Now we're talking. More likely than not, American intelligence strongly suspects bin Laden et al. but can't prove his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Police detectives are repeatedly frustrated by this dilemma. What do you do when you know in your gut that a suspect is guilty, but you don't have enough evidence to press charges? The answer is painfully obvious: you let the bastard walk. In a society based on law, evidence must be sufficiently compelling in order to charge a defendant, much less convict him. To settle for less is to sacrifice the essential principle of our nation which holds that everyone—even radical Islamists—is presumed innocent.

George W. Bush, an unscrupulous man whose arrogant contempt for the law elevated him to the White House, despises basic American values. He acted as Afghanistan's judge, jury and executioner—without even possessing sufficient proof to charge bin Laden in an American court.

Now, however, Bush is paying a price for the decision not to lay his cards on the table regarding Afghanistan. While 90% of voters say they don't doubt that Saddam Hussein is developing weapons of mass destruction, 72% told a *Los Angeles Times* poll on Dec. 15 that Bush has not yet provided enough evidence to justify starting a war against Iraq. This figure clearly includes many Republicans who otherwise support Bush's policies.

Most Americans have a gut feeling that Iraq has WMDs. But they don't think a gut feeling is sufficient cause to go to war.

Here we go again. Does the US really possess proof, as it claims, that Saddam is up to no good? Or does it merely suspect—in other words, have a gut feeling—that Iraqi scientists are cooking up smallpox bombs hundreds of feet beneath the desert? The American people aren't being allowed to see the evidence excusing the bloody war about to be waged in their name. Nor are the prospective allies whose help—and young men—we are requesting. "To say that we know but we won't tell you is not very persuasive," Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Ambassador to the United Nations, said. "It's not a poker game where you call your cards and call the other's bluff."

Incredibly, Bush even resisted turning over intelligence data on Iraqi weapons to the UN, information might help inspectors prove that Saddam was violating the 1991 ceasefire agreement.

Approval ratings for an American war on Iraq are slipping. Unless he coughs up definitive proof of Iraqi wrongdoing or calls off the whole thing, this latest oil-driven military misadventure may become Bush's political Waterloo.

NEW BOOK: *GAS WAR: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN* is now out. It's my comprehensive, painstakingly researched look at the real reason Bush ordered the invasion of Afghanistan: to run a gas pipeline from the world's biggest oil reserves (in Kazakhstan) to the sea for transportation by tankers. *GAS WAR* relies on mainstream sources to piece together the biggest scandal of the century so far—how the world's richest nation bombed its poorest for the sake of corporate gain. *GAS WAR* is available through my website www.RALL.com or Amazon but not through bookstores because none of my regular publishers dared touch this controversial topic. Alternatively, you can mail $15 (includes Priority Mail shipping within the US) to: Ted Rall, PO Box 2092, Times Square Station, New York NY 10108.

The Economics of Image

ALL
HAIL
THE
MARKET!
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NATHAN BERG

The past decade has proven that advertisers are obsessed with image. For the past few years, Sprite's television ads have attempted to promote the message that "image is nothing…thirst is everything." Of course, were that true, Sprite (or Coca-Cola, its parent company) wouldn't then need to run television ads with popular rap stars or NBA players reminding us to drink Sprite. In fact, if thirst was "everything," Sprite wouldn't really need to run advertisements at all, except possibly a few sparsely placed public service announcements that would remind us to drink something/anything if we were thirsty. After all, there are thousands of thirst-quenching fluids one could drink on this planet, one of the most prominent of which actually covers about 70% of its surface area, so it wouldn't matter if you were drinking Sprite or herbal tea, so long as it was quenching your parched throat.

Canon, the beloved camera company, was a little bit closer to the mark when it had tennis stud Andre Agassi tell us that "image is everything." After all, they could've had some average Joe send us the same message and saved themselves a few hundred thousand dollars. But that wasn't the "image" they were going for.

Advertisers of late are in a rabid pursuit of carefully-crafted "images," which they like to refer to as "brands." But by the term "advertisers," I'm actually referring to the companies being promoted, not the ad agencies who do the actual crafting. After all, most of the major brands that we recognize spend much more money and energy on the societal portrayal of their products than they do on the actual products themselves. Nike doesn't produce shoes, it produces Nike. In the case of most major brands, this is true in the most literal sense imaginable. Clothes manufacturer Tommy Hilfiger actually doesn't manufacture clothes at all. Its jeans are made by Pepe Jeans London, its shirts by Oxford Industries, its shoes by Stride Rite, its underwear by Jockey International, and so on. Tommy Hilfiger simply orders its crap with certain specific standards, including a well-known Hilfiger logo, tacks on a massive price tag, and then promotes/sells the hell out of it.

And here you have the present-day brands. Through the combined benefits of modern technology, media concentration, free-trade agreements, Third World labor laws, and consumer tracking, producers no longer have to produce products. They simply have to have come up with a proper image. And, believe me, an image is exactly what it is—imaginary.

When you say the name "Shell" to the average American, they don't picture the desolate, environmentally devastated country of Nigeria, with Ken Saro Wiwa and friends hanging from nooses in the town square and women being stoned to death for having affairs with people they love as opposed to the ones they were forced to marry. They don't envision corrupt government/military officials terrorizing their own citizens, who already have to cope with (or die from) some of the highest disease rates in the entire world. Their heads don't conjure up scenes of rivers on fire, or even smog-infested freeways where the simple act of breathing for five minutes is akin to smoking a pack of Lucky's. They won't even picture the Shell board member smiling as he jumps in his golf cart and chalks up a birdie for Hole #8. Sadly, these gruesome images *are* a more accurate portrayal of the Royal Dutch Shell Company. But bring up that name "Shell" to anyone in conversation—even myself—and the first image their head will produce is that lovely, glowing, yellow and red logo. After that, maybe they'll picture the clean-cut Shell service station or their flashy Shell gas card. Perhaps they'll even briefly recall that beautiful two-page spread they recently saw in their favorite magazine that explained all of the miraculous environmental achievements Shell is in constant pursuit of. This is the power of the image and this is why major multinational corporations spend billions upon billions of dollars manufacturing it.

However, this trend of image-building has become so overwhelming that our entire society now lives and breathes it. Nothing and no one is without an image these days.

Long gone are the days when books simply had their titles and authors printed on the spine, and thus relied upon content alone as a selling point. Nowadays, books have eye-catching covers and are often littered with quotes from favorable reviews or famous people. Even stranger, a large percentage of them are now sold in massive stores with wide aisles, comfy couches, and coffee stands—all crafted to give the store the feel of a library. Or, in the case of the largest modern book retailer, you can't even touch the books you are interested in buying or even the store that's selling them to you. You simply make a few clicks of the mouse and they show up at your doorstep a week later. It is nothing but a total image.

A local restaurant here in Madison is doing everything it can to promote the concept of eating locally. Often preceding the names of foods that the average person couldn't pronounce/recognize/afford, you'll find the name of the farm where said food was grown or raised or the farmer that supplied it. In addition, the restaurant has a warm ambiance, a French name that helps one instantly recognize the style of cuisine being prepared, and a popular chef who recently won a James Beard award for culinary excellence. Throw it all together and you have their image. What this restaurant serves, and the environmental practices that it promotes, are surely something to be proud of (at least in some facets), but that doesn't mean that they aren't benefiting from the propagation of this image. After all, an image doesn't necessarily require painting a prettier picture than what actually exists, it just requires the painting of a picture.

And with that ever-present view of imagery in mind, it's interesting to note that even our blessed punk rock is but a vast array of constructed images. Punk rock bands often vocally challenging the image-heavy ways of mainstream musicians, labels, and magazines. Some would probably even take an "image is nothing" stance similar to that of Sprite, but they are just as involved with image control as those they rally against.

When promoters carried out Woodstock '94 as a 25th anniversary of the infamous music festival, everyone from punk rock to mainstream to yours truly dismissed the event as a nightmare of music commercialization. Not to defend what was a positively nauseating scene, I was nonetheless interested to hear promoter John Robert's response to critics: "If a kid [nowadays] went to a concert and there wasn't merchandise to buy, he'd probably go out of his mind."

This statement could easily apply to the punk scene as well. How many punk shows have you been to lately where there wasn't a t-shirt or record or patch for sale? Some of the larger "punk" bands like NOFX and the like sell a huge array of merchandise—everything from hats to hoodies to socks. I believe it was the CASUALTIES who came through town and were selling bottle openers with their name on it (though I can't remember for sure since I probably opened a few too many bottles myself that evening—and because I didn't buy one). DEATHREAT even sold skateboard decks. These items help to convey a certain image and that's what consumers, punk or otherwise, have come to expect in this day and age. When we go to a show, we expect to not only watch the band and dance and have fun, we often want to buy something that proves we were there and conveys the image of the band. Sometimes, in the punk rock scene, these images can be rather repetitive and predictable (Oh really? You're against war, corporations, meat, *and* cops?), but that's kind of the nature of scenes where people think much alike. I mean, can you imagine a big, yellow, smiley-face TRAGEDY shirt? Or, better yet, can you imagine TRAGEDY putting their name on anything (shirt, record or otherwise) that didn't have black on it? Sure, it's a bit predictable, but that's because they've got an image to stick to.

Now, before I go and cause such an uproar that punkers go nuts and do something unthinkable (like, say, write me a letter), let me note that I'm not saying this commercialism of imagery is an outright bad thing. It wouldn't play a big part in my own personal utopia but, in our modern society (which is definitely not my utopia), image is so prevalent that it's virtually imperative.

If modern commercialism is largely a set of well-varying images, which are so strong and common that they perpetuate themselves into everything else in society, it is up to each of us to inform ourselves about them and personally decide which ones we should believe, criticize, embrace, tarnish, create, or destroy. And, even though the massive "brands" out there use their images to deceive and profit, they're still forced to make their money the old-fashioned way: we have to give it to them. Yes, I've beaten this point into the dirt over the years, but I never tire of reminding folks that it's us—and our friends, family, co-workers, and comrades—that can ultimately punish these image-purveyors for their actions.

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For your information, many of the ideas/thoughts/facts in this article were inspired/borrowed/stolen/misconstrued from the book *No Logo*, by Naomi Klein. I recently reread this book (yes, I'm a nerd) and had almost forgotten how accurate/depressing/uplifting it was. If any of you appreciate the subject matter of my columns, then you owe it to yourselves to read a book on the subject by an author who knows her shit, writes much more effectively, and probably didn't write the book on the last possible day of her publishing deadline. But, for gods sake, make an effort to find it somewhere other than Borders or Barnes and Noble.

Next month, I'll continue this subject of image a bit further and talk about fun subjects like copyrights, trademarks, and intellectual property rights. Should be a hoot.

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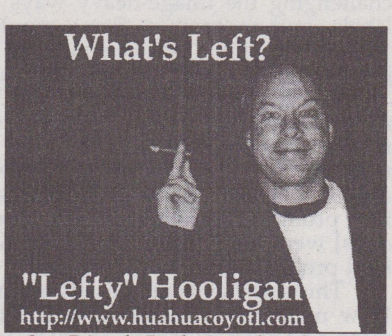
For your further information, you can address a letter to me as such: Nathan Berg, c/o Rainbow Bookstore Co-op, 426 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703. I'd tell you to send me a copy of your awesome zine, so I can read it, decide I like it, and write you back to order a more copies to put up on our shelves at our awesome cooperative radical bookstore, but you probably wouldn't do it anyhow…



It was a punk rock show in San Diego, sometime in the late 1980's. I think the venue was the old Palisades roller rink, and the five-band lineup featured a couple of hardcore bands that were considered speed metal crossovers—COC or DRI or somebody similar. I was doing my usual anarcho-punk tabling outside the show, with my own 'zine *San Diego's Daily Impulse* plus antimilitarism literature from a couple of local peace groups I belonged to at the time.

The crowd looked like trouble, not because of their mood or behavior, but because of their diversity. Punks, skinheads, rockers and metal heads had all queued up for tickets, and I was predicting major problems before the night was over. There already had been a few altercations and other incidents on the street, prompting neighbors and local businesses to repeatedly call the police. A couple of black and whites had cruised by or stopped at various times, the last one with a warning that one more serious complaint and the cops would shut down the show.

Trouble started soon after the fourth band took the stage. The large, mostly boarded up glass front doors of the former roller rink suddenly burst open with a loud crash as two burly males hurled through, locked together in battle. They hit the sidewalk and were immediately surrounded by a throng of spectators rooting for blood and broken bones. I got a good look at the fighters when they stood, as both were head and shoulders above the crowd. One was a local asshole skinhead named Tony in his Agnostic Front t-shirt and the other a stringy haired, Slayer wearing metal head I didn't know.

They were bashing each other good, their brawl raging in and out of the building so the doors remained wide open, affording a great view of the band currently on stage. Screaming music also roared out into the night. The mob watching the fight only grew as folks piled up inside and out on the sidewalk. Now here's the thing. Most folks on the San Diego punk scene hated and feared Tony. He was a bully who constantly picked on people, harassed women, pummeled folks in the pit, started fights, beat up people, got drunk and disorderly, disrupted shows, you name it. Yet all the punks watching him fight the dirt head that night were cheering for Tony, acting as if he were their long lost brother or something.

No amount of frantic yelling and pushing by the promoter's security could either stop the fight or force everybody back inside the hall. True to their word, the police came and shut down the show.

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I was on a crowded subway this last time in New York City. The long seat across from me was full, with about six short skinny Mexican men sitting at one end. Clearly, they knew each other because they were laughing and joking and talking quite animatedly as the train rolled from station to station. The guy at the end had a large cardboard box on the floor between his legs.

A huge black man got on our car at the next stop. He was over six feet tall and almost as wide, sullen, wearing a bandana over his shaved head. He walked up to the line of seated Mexicans and glared down at them. Without a word, he gestured with his hand, sticking a thumb out from his side. There was a good deal of apprehension in their upturned faces as the six Mexicans squeezed down as far as they possibly could to make room for him. The guy holding the box moved it out onto the car floor so he could jam into the seat with his compatriots.

"Damn right you motherfuckers are gonna make room." The black guy turned and said to nobody in particular. He sat, but the space they'd made for him still wasn't quite wide enough. The Mexican closest to him writhed against his already compacted fellows, his face clearly in pain from being partly crushed. Somehow, the Mexicans found the extra space to cram into to accommodate the hostile black rider. They didn't say a word to each other until the black man disembarked three stops later.

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I carry a gag postcard around in my calendar book. On one side, a bold title reads "Map of World Communism" above a line map of the world, with the landmasses shaded gray. Cuba, Peoples' Republic of China, Vietnam and North Korea are various colors of red, and then there's the big red dot labeled Peoples' Republic of Berkeley. The caption on the other side reads: "Warning: the red areas on this map are liable to change without warning."

It gives me a chuckle. I got it at the Anapurna head shop on Berkeley's Telegraph Avenue. I've seen the postcards for Santa Monica and Ann Arbor, the one of Santa Monica from a time when the sea of red covered Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union as well as eastern Europe. I know it's a gimmicky tourist, make fun of your local liberal college town kind of thing. But I like it anyway. Recently, when I took out my calendar to schedule an appointment, a friend saw the card.

"Looks like there should be a slightly smaller red dot marked 'Lefty' Hooligan in San Francisco." He smirked as he handed it back to me.

"Only that dot's red is not liable to change." I replied.

Which isn't quite true. When I got politics in 1968, at the age of 16, I was an anarchist-pacifist. Now I'm a left communist. The color of that dot has shifted from black to red in the last 34 odd years. I've sketched out a timeline of the various stages I passed through between then and now in previous columns. I've also talked about the fact that while I got politics in 1968, I wasn't radicalized until 1971, three years later.

It's easy enough to understand why I became political in 1968. From the Columbia University strike and occupation to May/June in Paris, from the Prague Spring to the Chinese Cultural Revolution, from the Chicago Democratic Convention to the massacre of students in Mexico City, the world seemed on the brink of revolution in 1968, with youth leading the charge. I admit I was swept away by the sheer exhilaration of the times. One event of 1968 in particular hit home hard with me, and that was the Vietnamese Tet Offensive. I was two years away from registering for the draft with Selective Service, and Tet proved that the light at the end of the tunnel in Vietnam was that of an onrushing train. The possibility of becoming cannon fodder in the Vietnam War definitely influenced my turn to politics in 1968.

Yet those politics were almost entirely naïve and untested, equal parts idealism and inexperience. An anti-war protest in my hometown of Ventura, California turned into a riot in 1971, and I watched a cop club down a good friend of mine at night in the middle of a park amidst swirling clouds of tear gas. I've related the details of this incident also in a past column. Instead of rehashing them, I'll summarize the gist of that epiphanal experience. I literally saw red I was so overwhelmed by rage. The next thing I remember a couple of friends were dragging me away from the park, saying that I'd lunged for the cop. From that moment on I realized I was not a pacifist. If I'd had a gun at that instant, the cop would be dead.

That revelation played havoc with me as I tried for a Conscientious Objector deferment with Selective Service. Fortunately, I got a high number in the Vietnam draft lottery, and so I didn't have to pursue a deferment based on pacifist grounds or go to Vietnam. That vivid, and violent intrusion of reality however changed my politics dramatically. That's where we begin this column; epiphanal moments that permanently change one's perspective, or one's life.

Many Communist Party members experienced such a revelation when Khrushchev exposed Stalin's crimes at the 20th Party Congress in 1956. They didn't necessarily stop being leftists, but they did drop out of the Communist Party. New Leftist and Ramparts editor David Horowitz had his revelation when a friend he'd recommended for a bookkeeping position with the Oakland Black Panther Party turned up dead. That still unsolved murder was instrumental in Horowitz's conversion to neo-conservatism, as he reveals in *Radical Son: A Generational Odyssey*. David Brock describes his opposite journey from right to left in his book *Blinded by the Right*. Noted for his savage smear of Anita Hill, Brock's epiphany came when, as a gay man in the Republican Party, he realized he was "a Jew in Hitler's army." Aryan Nations leader Floyd Cochran started his turnabout, and move to the left when his son was born with a cleft palate and fellow Aryan Nations members told him the boy should be killed because he was "genetically inferior." A well-known SRAF anarchist in the 1960's, 'Red' Worthan, became a stone Nazi after his girlfriend was raped by a couple of black men.

Granted the epiphanies associated with these conversions are basically the same, in structure and unfolding of the experience, as when you put on that Ramones record for the first time and suddenly realized you'd been wasting your life listening to free jazz and from now on you would dedicate yourself to punk rock. Of course I recognize there's a huge difference in seriousness, in depth if you will between deciding to join the Communist or Nazi parties and deciding to join a punk rock band, even if each decision was based on a life altering experience. From a dramatic change in the direction of one's politics to an abrupt about face, what we're interested in is something life changing that comes out of a single moment of insight and awareness.

There are those who will argue that such "road to Damascus" conversion experiences are largely illusory, that in most cases various precursors can be found, and that once the commitment to change is made there's a long process from the initial conversion to being fully conversant with the new way of thinking or set of beliefs. Nevertheless, people often experience a turning point of some kind, a dramatic break, a moment during which the scales fall from their eyes and they make a profound, life-altering discovery.

By including my own experiences in this context, I'm acknowledging that epiphanal moments have played an important part in shaping my politics. Again, I understand there's a difference in degree if not in kind between deciding not to be a pacifist yet remaining a leftist, and deciding to renounce and denounce one's leftism for a newly acquired right-wing ideology. That hasn't been the only way my politics have changed either. My transition from left anarchism to left communism was far more gradual, based on a combination of my political work at the time, serious reflection on my political history, and a lot of reading over a decade. It's a far more intelligent and reasonable way to change, to be sure, but one that lacks a certain passion. It is passion that distinguishes the political epiphany, and passion is what's so very problematic. The overwhelming, emotionally saturated nature of such moments weld those who experience them to their new perspective with an intensity and conviction that is often next to impossible to shake. Even if that perspective is dead wrong.

All of this is by way of introducing a rather touchy subject; folks I know who are progressive or leftist in one way or another who have now jumped gung-ho on the anti-terrorism bandwagon, to the point of endorsing military action against Afghanistan and Iraq. Some have even approved of domestic curtailments to civil liberties in the name of security. Initially, the suddenly transformed attitudes of a couple of people I know on the East Coast—in New York and Washington DC—provoked me to write this column. I've since talked to folks in San Diego and even San Francisco who now want to "nuke 'em all" as a consequence of September 11. Most of these people I consider my friends, and unlike Mykel Board, I have no wish to alienate them by dragging them by name through print.

There's no question that the events of September 11, 2001 were horrific, but why would some of my friends go from a lifetime of suspecting and opposing the American government to a rah-rah support of Junior Bush's dubious world war against international terrorism? When it was just folks on the East Coast I chalked their conversions up to the trauma of being right next door to the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon when they were attacked. I even wondered if I might not respond the same way had the Golden Gate Bridge been deliberately attacked and destroyed during rush hour traffic. But as more and more of my friends in other places started waving the red-white-and-blue, I realized that the emotional power of September 11 has created a false identification of the country and its people with the government.

For whatever reason, when my friends witnessed jet airplanes hijacked by terrorists crashing into the World Trade towers, they made an emotionally based equation that said: "Terrorists are attacking my people, my country, my government and me." This kneejerk conflation of the country and its people with the US government in an emotionally charged process of self-identification actually repeats the fallacy promoted by both international followers of Osama bin Laden and hardcore Leninist Leftists in this country. The latter two also contend that America and its people are identical to the US government in an opposite process of personal rejection that says: "I'm against all that." Much of the hardcore American Left was positively gleeful when the WTC and Pentagon were struck, claiming that America deserved it and that there are no innocents in a democracy. My friends rightly rejected that this country deserved to be attacked or that the people who were killed on September 11 were somehow guilty of the US government's crimes by virtue of being citizens. Yet, because they've unconsciously linked the people and country with the government, the American state is also seen as wrongly attacked and innocent of crime, if not by logical conclusion the best means to protect the country and its people from terrorism.

This is all quite bizarre since both my friends on the antiauthoritarian Left and people on the Left in general subscribed intellectually pre-September 11 to the argument that America is not a democracy. Much was always made of the fact that rarely half of those eligible to vote register, and that rarely half of those registered actually vote. It was duly noted that not much of a difference exists between the Democratic and Republican parties, both of which rely on corporate monies and cater to business interests. Care was taken to point out that the elected representatives of this republic are all rich, and dependent on corporations and the rich for the money to get elected. Detailed flowcharts were drawn up to demonstrate that those who are elected to govern also sit on the ruling boards and executives of all the major institutions and corporations of this country's military-industrial complex. Flesh was added to the bones of this capitalist ruling class by describing the common web of advantaged upbringing, privileged education, exclusive social networks, elite marriages and families, etc. etc. that make the *bourgeoisie* a true social class. That a capitalist class rules this country and much of the world is not a new concept to the Left, nor is the notion that one of the ways this class rules is through the farce we call representative democracy.

Yet all this analysis about America's capitalist ruling class and the lack of true democracy in this country went out the window on September 11 it seems. Leninoids who rabidly denounced the capitalist imperialist fascist *bourgeoisie* prior, afterwards gleefully chortled that America deserved it and no one is innocent in a democracy. And many of my anarcho-friends who were deeply distrustful of the state, scornful of patriotism, and utterly opposed to militarism and empire before 9/11, are now demanding the US nuke 'em all. Such was the emotional force of that event.

I've remained relatively unperturbed through what to many has been a political and emotional rollercoaster ride since September 11, hence my anecdote above about the postcard. In part that's because I do make a distinction between the country and its people on the one hand and the government on the other. I love the former, distrust the latter, simple as that. I think this country was criminally attacked and that Islamic fascists murdered thousands of innocent people. At the same time I think that, as far as the US government's imperial ambitions and imperialist history are concerned, September 11 was a case of the chickens coming home to roost. I also think that unless the American people and the world community stop Junior Bush from going to war with Iraq, not to mention from continuing his hundred years world war against international terrorism, this country and its people will be less free, less democratic, less peaceful, less safe and less secure as a consequence.

I can use the other two anecdotes above as analogies to illustrate my stand, conveniently enough. The United States—its plutocratic government, its overwhelming military might, and its overpowering corporate economy—is like the big black guy who gets on the subway and pushes the otherwise quite happy group of Mexicans around to give him a seat. When this happens day after day for weeks and months on end, somebody is going to get pissed or reach a breaking point eventually. One of those Mexicans finally might refuse to move and dare to fight with the pushy black passenger. US imperial aggression too has been met by open military resistance, for instance by the successful Vietnamese Communists with the support of the vast majority of the Vietnamese people during America's military involvement in Indochina.

Far too often however, all direct resistance proves futile. Going back to the anecdote as analogy, one of the Mexicans on the subway finally cracks after long months of antagonism and abuse, but instead of going up against his tormentor mano y mano, he follows the black man home and shoots dead one of his children in revenge. Clearly, no matter how we spin the situation, it was wrong, vile and criminal for him to kill the kid, even if the youngster fully supported his father and what he did. The child was innocent of the sins of the father. At the same time, it's crucial to understand how and why the black man's fucked up belligerent behavior lead one of his victims to strike back and murder one of his kids. The murder must be condemned, but so must the asshole behavior that provoked the murder. The murder of innocents on September 11 must be denounced, as must the decades of equally murderous imperial US foreign policy that set the stage for the murder of innocents.

As I see it, we're all just trying to enjoy this great big show we call life. We want to hang out, enjoy the music, maybe dance a little, get high, talk up a little action, you get the picture. Maybe we want to do something meaningful and creative and we're in one of the performing bands, or maybe we want to organize and get things down and we're putting on the show. Whatever our role in the show might be, the show itself keeps getting disrupted, and ultimately shut down, by two fuckheads who want to bash each other's brains out. At first it was Junior Bush and bin Laden, until Osama proved way too elusive, embarrassing Bush because he couldn't get bin Laden "dead or alive." Now it's Junior Bush and Saddam Hussein who are circling each other, itching for a fight. The weird thing is, we all know Bush is an asshole, but when he starts a fight with some other asshole out there in the world like Hussein, he becomes *our* asshole, and we stand behind him one hundred percent. That means the big show of life gets disrupted and shut down without fail for all of us. Instead what we need to do, those of us who want to enjoy the show, is organize ourselves and kick out the assholes who want to fight and fuck up the show for the rest of us. That means regime change, not just in Iraq but in this country as well.

Next issue, prognostication into April.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Let's Get Hurt! By Mitch Cardwell

LET'S
GET
HURT
MITCH
CARDWELL

It's been many months since Icki Murrmann retired his *If You Die and Go To Hell WHO CARES?* column, leaving a void in the lives of record dorks across the world. In the column's absence, I was able to ease the pain by checking out a few other sources, but I have long felt the desire for someone at *MRR* to take up the reins and lead us through the dreaded sea of vinyl and plastic. In following the search for a replacement, I'm sure you can imagine my surprise when I found out that I was a candidate (especially considering that my brainpower and taste in rocknroll could be described as "suspect" at best). I can only assume that my selection was based solely on the fact that I'm the only one around with enough time (and brain damage) to make a go of this resurrection. So, here we are: with humungous shoes to fill, I present *Let's Get Hurt!* I'm flattered, nervous, and very much looking forward to pointing you towards the cream of the crap. My intention is to use Icki's column as a model, so hopefully the transition will be as seamless as possible. With that, I'm very pleased to meet you and let's dive right in!

I think it's only fair to cover some of the highlights of 2002, if only to bring everybody up to speed. I think we'll start at the top: the fantastic FM KNIVES *Useless and Modern* CD, released on Moo La La Records. Without batting an eye, this was my absolute favorite release of last year (as I've been telling everyone within earshot since its release). If you've been yearning for a band that plays sweet'n'slashy punk in the vein of THE BOYS, BUZZCOCKS or THE KIDS, then this exactly what you've been looking for. The Moo La La CD is now out of print, but a repress (on LP too!) is coming in early 2003 on Broken Rekids. It should also be mentioned that FM Knives have just released *Estrogen* (that sounds *really* funny), a killer 7" on SmartGuy Records. It's a scary thought, but I think this band is actually getting better! Do yourself a favor…

You simply can't go around spewing out "best of 2002" nonsense without mentioning Indiana's JOHN WILKES BOOZE. JWB released their debut 45 on Rock'n'Roll Blitzkrieg in early 2002, but you probably missed out on their remarkable *Five Pillars of Soul* CDR series. These releases have forced me to recognize the CDR as a legitimate release format, which was a realization that a vinyl junkie like myself did not arrive at lightly. What helped was the fact that each Pillar was released in a limited and handmade fashion, a tactic that's sure to please any record nut. Playing up to compulsive dorks is fine and all, but the true joy of these releases is the passion and flat-out rock JWB belts out in each installment, flirting with both Midwestern inspired punk and MC5 soul/jazz implosion. Each Pillar is a dedication to a figure that JWB feels is either misunderstood or incredibly influential to their personal view of soul: Melvin Van Peeples, Tania Hearst, Albert Ayler, Marc Bolan, and Yoko Ono. I believe a couple of the Pillars are already out of print (portions from all five will soon be collected on an LP), but check 'em out at their website, www.johnwilkesbooze.com.

In mid-2002, On/On Switch Records released the debut albums by RADAR SECRET SERVICE and CRIMSON SWEET, both of which are criminally underrated. Radar Secret Service's *Stop Communication* has been getting heavy rotation at my place since its release, which is strange considering that their sound could be described as *very* post-punky. While RSS may not be everyone's cup of tea, Crimson Sweet's debut album, *Livin' In Strut*, is simply a full-on rocknroll record that flows from NYC glitter-tinged punk to slightly post-punk moments. The On/On folks know their shit, and you should investigate their releases. Let's move on to new release territory. A fantastic place to start is with the debut single by the FINAL SOLUTIONS, a new combo featuring the great Jay Reatard! What's striking about this is that since Jay runs the synth-punk powerhouse known as the LOST SOUNDS, you'd think he'd be too busy to go around bending more minds in another combo. In The Final Solutions, we see some trademark Reatard bashing and buzzing, but the flavor is more along the lines of the rudest *Killed By Death* tunes. Some of this stuff is so incredibly wrong, but it feels so right! *We Are The Final Solutions* is my favorite single of 2002, although Therapeutic Records probably won't get it to the distros until this hits stands. I would suggest looking at the Goner Records or Underground Medicine mail order catalogs if you wanna score this (who wouldn't?).

BBQ is the new one-man-band project of Mark Sultan, the artist formerly known as Creepy from the SPACESHITS. For BBQ, Mark is now known as Kib Husk, so the aliases keep on coming. The debut BBQ single has just been released on Goodbye Boozy Records.

Bancroft Records is a new label run by Dale Merrill, editor of the fantastic *Smashin' Transistors* webzine. If reading his great zine wasn't proof enough, his first two releases have clearly shown that this is a man who knows his rocknroll! The MYSTERY GIRLS *Turned On, Tuning In 7"* packs all the wallop of their fantastic album on Trickknee Productions (which was another 2002 fave of mine). Bancroft #2 is the debut 7" by the TEARS, a new band featuring members of CATHOLIC BOYS and STRONG COME ONS.

Is anyone else disappointed with the new LP by the

STITCHES? I know a lot of folks shit their pants over this band, but I've been pretty unimpressed by the majority of their recent output (although I still get a kick out of them live). Doesn't really matter though, yer probably gonna buy all their shit anyway…

Cock Punch Records has just released a really good regional (Ohio) compilation LP entitled *Let's Get Killed* (great minds think alike, I suppose). The bulk of the comp showcases bands like KILL THE HIPPIES, the SOCIALS, ZERO CRAG and (my personal favorite) the PIRATES WHO CARVE OUT YOUR EYES AND PISS IN YOUR EYE SOCKETS. Yes, you can just feel the love. It's limited to 500 copies and well worth investigating.

Following along this line of scene comps, The *Anatomy Of A…* 7" is a collaborative release by four Portland, OR labels: Johnny Cat Records, Vinyl Warning, Extra Ball Records, and Jealous Butcher Records. Each label is represented by one band: the TRIGGERS, ELECTRIC EYE, CAPTAIN VS. CREW and (my favorite) the HUNCHES! They pulled out all the stops for this one, using silk-screened sleeves, mint green wax, and a limited pressing of 400 copies to entice all the dorks. I think most of these were sold exclusively at a few record-release shows in that area, but try contacting any of the above-mentioned labels for a copy. On a side note, Vinyl Warning has just released decent singles by the Triggers and the EXPLODING HEARTS, both of which are worth your time and money.

I've heard a lot of folks complaining about their inability to locate the A FRAMES LP. Sorry to kill your hopes, but the LP is now out of print. Fear not though, SS Records will be releasing a CD version in early 2003. In the meantime, be sure to check out THE INTELLIGENCE, a great band featuring Lars of the A Frames. They have a new split 7" (with POPULAR SHAPES) on Dirtnap Records.

The long-threatened SEGER LIBERATION ARMY single has finally been released by Big Neck Records! SLA is a band composed of members of the DIRTBOMBS, COME ONS, and NEW BOMB TURKS. Obviously, the intention is to pay tribute to (or make fun of) Bob Seger. Approach with extreme caution!

Rapid Pulse Records has really upped the ante in their assault on the wallets of singles-crazed punkers. A new single by BARSE was recently released, but their latest offering is the final release by *Big Beef Bonanza* worshippers, the DIAL-TONES…on three different colors of vinyl no less! They've got some more goodies planned: singles by the SAVIORS, the INVERSIONS and the first new release in ages by NIKKI CORVETTE! The last one makes me kinda nervous…

One of the most off-kilter bands I've run across recently is Wisconsin's BLUE BALLS, a two-piece band that makes a full-length cassette-only release each and every month! They've got something like 20 cassette albums already! I don't remember the last time I bought a tape, but this is simply too weird for me to ignore. To compliment Blue Balls, there's also BLUE BALLS EXPLOSION, which is the same band plus an additional member (BBE released a great 45 on High School Refuse not too long ago).

If you think it's tough keeping up with all the new shit coming out, try staying on top of all the bootlegs and reissues! All those boot-alike "classic" punk singles generally seem to be tapering off as of late (probably due to that fact that those brilliant Dangerhouse Records bootlegs are nearly impossible to improve upon), but the SNUKY TATE *Who Cares?* 7" has been given the treatment. It features some prime 1979 SF *Killed By Death* punk, and the band is composed of folks from the MUTANTS if that helps you out any. I've also seen boot-alike copies of the MISFITS *Cough Cool* single floating around recently, so if you simply *have* to stare at the pic sleeve, go right ahead. I'm sure these replica bootlegs will pick up again as early as next month, so be prepared…

Vince Lombardy High School Records has finally reissued the first two LPs by one of the finest German '77 weirdo bands, BIG BALLS AND THE GREAT WHITE IDIOT. You've probably encountered them on *Bloodstains Across Germany*, so here's your chance to hear more. I believe some of their later material is still available from various mailorder distros as well.

Apparently, Munster Records has reissued some material by the CONTORTIONS! I've yet to see this 2xLP in the stores, but the distro lists all say that it's available. It's strange seeing this kind of stuff resurface and get all this attention now. Last year, it seemed that there would be ten new boots or reissues of bands like the MISFITS, the RAMONES or the CRAMPS every time I hit the store. Now, it's all JOY DIVISION/WARSAW and THE FALL. I guess the appetites are changing…

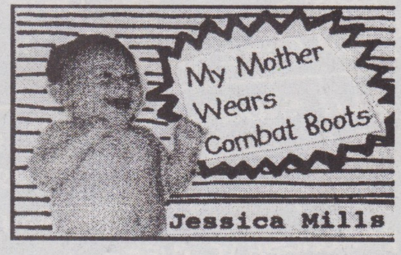
Here's one for the hardcore crowd. I'm sure fans were all pleased to see Reflex Records re-release a lot of classic hardcore on LP in 2002 (who *didn't* grab the JERRY'S KIDS reissue?). The news with Reflex is that they've got POISON IDEA and OFFENDERS reissues planned, so keep an eye out for those.

Rave Up Records has refused to let up on their "American Lost Punk Rock Nuggets" series. These have always been pretty hit-and-miss with me, as they often result in one or two good tunes surrounded by inaudible and boring live material. I will say that they've done a great job unearthing stuff and they are capable of putting out a really worthwhile reissue (I point you toward the FEATURES, LOS REACTORS and the BRATS). Their latest wave features LPs by the VIOLATORS (Colorado '78), the PRODUCTS (California '80), the TRANSPLANTS (Massachusetts '80), the FOREIGN OBJECTS (Massachusetts '79) and THE DOUBT (Ireland '81), none of which I have heard (yet). I'll probably be saving my dough for the SUICIDE COMMANDOS release they've got planned!

While the Rave Up stuff is generally a gamble, Detour Records has built a reputation of reissuing the finest in UK mod and power pop. Every Detour reissue I've come across has been perfect: great sound, great packaging and a really great selection of bands to reissue. Some suggestions to get you acquainted with Detour: THE INCREDIBLE KIDDA BAND *Too Much, Too Little, Too Late!* 2xLP, FAST CARS *Coming…Ready Or Not!* LP, STRANGEWAYS *Power Pop!* LP, the CIGARETTES *Will Damage Your Health!* 2xLP and LONG TALL SHORTY *Completely Perfect* 2xLP. That should be enough to keep anyone busy, and there's not a dud in the bunch!

Without question, the biggest and best surprise in the "old shit" department is that a flock of *original and unplayed copies* (yeah, you heard right!) of the first two singles by Sacramento's first punk band, the TWINKEYZ, are finding their way into record bins for $5 a pop! I don't know the scoop with these excavated treasures (I'm assuming that the probable explanation is "band member cleans attic" or something), but I'm sure glad it happened. The debut, *Aliens In Our Midst*, is available for consumption, featuring a reproduced sleeve and the original vinyl (a scant 100 copies of this repro sleeve edition are available). Their second single, *E.S.P.*, is available using both the real-deal sleeves and vinyl! Don't know the total of available copies, but it's probably *really* slim. In your hunt, you might run across their complete discography CD on Anopheles or the recent *Cartoon Land* LP retrospective, but these singles are a true piece of Sacramento's proto-punk kings! If you see either of these gems, fucking *buy them!*

I think that about does it for this month folks! By next month, I should have a PO Box, so feel free to send stuff to me at that time. If you simply can't wait, go ahead and send the finest in punk and garage to the regular MRR address, Attn: Mitch/Let's Get Hurt! Until next time…letsgethurt@yahoo.com.



In my parenting, gender identity/coding is something at the forefront of my consciousness, especially because I have a daughter. I've written a bit about gender coding in previous columns (issue #209, for example); when she was born, we were gifted with lots of pink outfits and even though we did dress her in pink sometimes, we also dressed her in lots of other colors. If she was dressed in anything other than pink, strangers would say, "Hi, little guy." It was alarming how often people would automatically assume to know the sex of my kid, as if they even needed to know that information before interacting with her further, as if that information would dictate their next choice of words and actions. Would they tell her she was beautiful or handsome? Would they offer her a doll or a truck?

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INTERPUNK

That was when she was a baby. Now as a toddler, the gender coding has continued. A few months ago at the bank, she asked the teller, "Excuse me, please I have a sticker?" The teller replied, "Oh, I'm sorry we only have stickers for boys. I'm all out of the girl stickers." Not usually quick on my tongue, I was proud of myself this time. I sarcastically blurted, "Oh, what a coincidence. She's Michael today." (It was true. My daughter had just recently become captivated by the *Peter Pan* movie and had, for that portion of the day anyway, renamed herself "Baby Michael Darling.") Confused and reluctant, the teller slowly handed my daughter a sticker with a picture of a truck on it. My daughter was happy but I was still pissed.

How dare this teller push that gender coding crap on my kid! I was mad at more than the teller, obviously. I was mad that I had to keep the battle against gender coding so high on my list of things to fight daily as a parent. Now whenever we're lucky enough to land ourselves at that teller's counter space, she snidely asks, "Who are you today?" The look on the teller's face is comparable to constipation when she hears my daughter's proud reply, "I Bob the Builder!"

Recently, I read an academic citation that suggested gender identity is formed by age five. That leaves her father and I, as well as her other trusted caregivers, another two and a half years to be on our toes, recognizing, examining, and taking action against the societal coding of such identity formation that began at birth and hasn't subsided. Unfortunately, I'm pretty sure we won't be taking any "victory over gender coding laps" at her fifth birthday party. I know from my own life experience that even though gender identity may be formed by age five, it's societally enforced through gender roles for years thereafter.

Besides asserting my protective parental authority over clueless bank tellers, I promise that I earnestly try to do a lot more to reinforce her father's and my simplified-so-a-toddler-can-begin-to-understand, healthy gender education mantra: "You're a female, but you can be a boy or a girl." I don't encourage one type of play over another. Instead, I follow her lead. We play with dolls or dig in the dirt with the same frequency. Same goes with toy and book and clothes selection. She chooses. If while playing with other kids, I overhear one of them say, "You can't play with that. That's for boys," (or vice-versa) I playfully interrupt to offer a contrary idea. One time, one of my daughter's male playmates took a football from her while telling her she couldn't play with it because it was for boys. They just happened to also be playing dress up and he was wearing a long flowing wedding gown. I told him that if she couldn't play with a football, then he couldn't wear a gown. He stopped what he was doing for a second and then gave a little chuckle before giving her the football back. I know that particular situation could have gone either way, he could have ripped the gown off and ran away with the football touchdown style, but I did my best and I was lucky that it worked that time.

In addition to doing my best to pay attention to gender coding language and actions, I got lucky again while reading the last issue of *Clamor* magazine in which I stumbled on a short blurb about a coloring book by JT Bunnell and Irit Reinheimer called *Boys Will Be Girls Will Be Boys.* I couldn't wait to get my hands on a copy. I actually got my hands on ten copies so I could pass them out to my daughter's favorite playmates. We parents need more playthings like this for our kids! It's somewhat of a challenge to find relatively gender-neutral playthings, but it's even harder find playthings that are a blatant challenge to gender! My two and a half-year-old might not be able to read the captions that say things like "Girls Against Gender Assignment" or "Grandpa, when we finish knitting, can we bake cookies?" but she can sure pick up on the messages that the pictures hold—an older man knitting with his little grandson—an adult female showing an adult male how to repair a lawn mower.

She's asked me to read it aloud a few times and I know her two and a half-year-old brain doesn't get out of it what mine does, but I color with her side by side and offer my own comments that I know she does understand and that will hopefully, in the long run as well as now, let her feel more relaxed and comfortable and confident to play how she wants to play, be whomever she wants to be and behave however she wants to behave.

What do I want you to get your favorite kid, parent, or teacher for their next birthday? You got it—this 32-page coloring book. I got mine by sending sliding scale, $4-$6 each plus postage, to PO Box 1213, New Paltz, NY 12561. You can email colormegenderless@facehugger.com for more information.

Punkparents, get in touch.
yardwideyarns@hotmail.com
PO Box 12839 / Gainesville, FL 32604

No.

From: The desk of John Ashcroft, Justice Department
To: The God-fearing, hard-drinking true American members of the US Citizen Corps, Punk Rock division

October, 2003

Do NOT be fooled! This cheerful missive is meant to warn you of a MOST HEINOUS threat to the comfortable, drunken status quo which you are rapidly settling into.

19TH CENTURY-STYLED DIRECT-ACTION ANARCHISM MAY BE READY TO STICK A HAT PIN INTO THE FLANK OF THE POLICE HORSE STANDING RIGHT OUTSIDE YOUR HOME AS YOU READ THIS!

Look around you when you are at a show sometime.

Do you realize that the drunken, nihilistic ROCK BAND you went to see this past weekend MAY contain AT LEAST ONE disgruntled COG from the machinery of international capital? And THEY have an outlet for their pent-up frustration. What about the people who stood next to you—The tough, grim woman in the leather jacket and fuzzy mullet; or the grizzled rocknroll hipster guy with muttonchop sideburns, glassy drunken eyes and silly grin, throwing the devil horn salute in the air? What about them? Are these folks, perhaps, gas station attendants? Telemarketers? Substitute teachers? Warehousers? Welfare recipients? Construction workers for expensive loft housing? Overworked high-tech employees? Underpaid music journalists? Low-level biopharmecutical research associates? Guitar Center salespeople?

Instead of being content with their place in society, they always want "more"—More money, more time off, more sex, more "stuff," more booze, more food, more health care, more "freedom." This is natural, as our God-given system of free-market capital drives people to always want MORE. This is why we are THE BEST COUNTRY EVER. The fact remains, however...MOST OF THESE PEOPLE WILL NEVER GET WHAT THEY WANT. Bitter, every one of them, just because they did not have the initiative to be born into, stumble into, or swindle great wealth from others like them. LOSER$.

This CLOUD of DISGRUNTLEDNESS hovers over us FULLY SATISFIED ONES like a plague. Why, it's horrifying to realize that, at any moment and independent of all control that the RESPONSIBLE 0.5% of people who righteously manage the vast bulk of worldwide capital can exact, this SOMEWHAT UNWASHED MASS could swell up in a big explosion of resentment. In fact, history has shown that they don't even need ORGANIZATION to do so! KEEP AN EYE ON THEM! Do all YOU can to prevent them from focusing their desperation on us FULLY SATISFIED ONES.

Why, can you imagine if one of these stinking PROLES got their grubby little fingers on a small nuclear device and put it in an old SUV or small truck parked directly in front of the US Capitol Building or White House?

Remember: Only YOU can prevent the mass from having a KNEEJERK REACTION!

—Johnny Conversation, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609.
johngeek@hotmail.com

They say that the older you get the faster time passes. And while that may be true, I think that there are other factors at play as well. Such as the way our society is all about doing everything faster: working faster, saving time with more devices, moving, turning, pushing, never ending. Somewhere along the line, it's as though the very pace of our lives sped up. I, for one, feel it big time, to the point where I have a hard time keeping up—even with myself. The days, weeks, and months seem to run together all the same. And it facilitates a feeling of defeat, of not being able to keep up with the pace of the world, let alone myself.

For those of you who are regular readers, you may have noticed my column has been missing for several issues, and that is partly because of this whole grasp of time thing—as well as this severe seasonal depression that gripped me by the fingers and sucked all the words right out of me before I could put them to paper. Suffice it to say, I don't think anyone could have benefited from the words that would have come from me during that time. But I know that there are plenty of other people who feel the dark days of winter as harshly as the current political climate of the world. My only current device for coping—or maintaining, as I have come to call it—has been reading. And reading, lately, I have realized is my escape. So I'm going to take this time to recommend some of my favorite books and writers, and perhaps it will spark something in you too.

For the seasonal funk—I have found May Sarton's *Journal of Solitude* to be a real lifesaver. She keeps a journal over winter in her New England home and ponders the process of writing and the changing seasons in a way that I found incredibly meaningful. It won't be for everyone—but Sarton's writing is intense. Also relating to the season shifts and changes, an invaluable reference book is Judith Berger's *Herbal Rituals,* which is a month-by-month guide to plants and herbs that represent the month and season. She sets the mood and lists their various uses, including recipes for teas and salves and therapeutic smelling things. But most important to me is that she sets the tone for the season in a way that gets keep at the heart of the soul of our in-tune-ness with the earth. Both of these books have saved my life at this time of year.

Lately, though, I have been in much more of an escapist state of mind, so I have been indulging in fiction. Around Halloween my favorite writer, Anne Rice, usually has a new book. This past year it was *Blackwood Farm,* in which she wove the stories of the witches and vampires together. Now admittedly, it doesn't get much more mainstream than Anne Rice, but she is one of my all time favorites and I absolutely adore all of her books.

My second favorite author is Marion Zimmer Bradley, who is a sci-fi fantasy master. She passed away several years ago, but it seems that she still has the occasional new book coming out co-authored by someone else. Her classic is the *Mist of Avalon,* which is without a doubt one of the best, most masterful books ever written. It's a telling of the Arthurian legend from the perspective of the women in the story. Weaving a bit of legend and a bit of the occult with a totally different perspective from anyone else who has tackled this common topic, this book is big and it will hold you enchanted for some time.

On a similar note of the retelling of classic legends from a woman's perspective is a recent bestseller, *The Red Tent* by Anita Diamant. This is a story about Biblical women. Now if I would have read that description, no interest would have been stirred in me. But forget about the Biblical aspect, because in a lot of ways it is irrelevant. The focus is on the herstory of women in classic times—the bonds of mother to daughter, to sister, to friend—it's a treasure likened only to the *Mist of Avalon.*

Both these favorites lead me to *The Ghost of Hannah Mendes,* by Naomi Ragan. This is one of those stories that tells the history of a family tracing back to ancient Europe as the matriarch passes on her legacy to her granddaughters in present New York City. The tale is another amazing one of strong women—in this case a particular Jewish woman who beat the Spanish Inquisition, posed as Catholic for many years, and eventually came back to her roots. It's a much more long and involved story than I can summarize in a few words.Once again, the religion is not the point—the history of this family through the ages, from the female lineage and all that they endured, is the beauty of this story. I'm a sucker for the strong fighter in a story.

Going back to Marion Zimmer Bradley now. She is perhaps, the most prolific sci-fi fantasy woman writer. My favorites are in her *Darkover* series. Now in my experience, there are those people who are drawn to the sci-fi fantasy, and then there are those people who won't go near the category. I am totally drawn, but in a very picky way. Bradley is perfect because once again we have a focus on female characters—in this case the common threads in her stories are telepathic powers and Amazon women. I've gotten many a friend hooked on these books, and believe me, there are many. The best thing is they are each a quick read and readily available is any used bookstore. But I warn you—you might become addicted and read them all in one winter, which is what I did.

While on the topic of rad women and sci-fi—I must also mention one of my other all time favorite books—*The Fifth Sacred Sign* by Starhawk. This is a futuristic utopia type of story that redefines the social order in a world changed by eco-disaster and politics. I think it's about time to re-read this book as the environment and political landscape have both changed quite a bit in the years since I read this gem. Starhawk has written a lot of books recently—weaving her practice of wiccan magic with anti-globalism activism. The latest one I came across is *Webs of Power: Notes From the Global Uprising.*

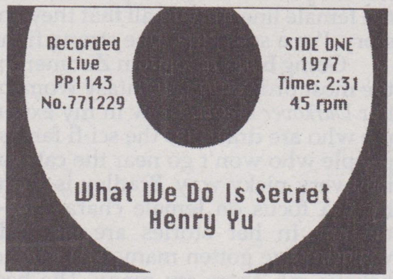
While on the topic of current events—and *war*—I highly recommend AK Press's *Addicted to War: Why the US Can't Kick Militarism* by Joel Andreas. This is a graphic guide to the history of the US involvement in wars back to the beginning. And it is one of those mind-blowing books that condense so much heavy information into a very simple, easy-to-digest format that really makes your head spin. And it will get you pissed, too, to realize the extent of the corruption, lies and bullshit that come from the government for the justification of war.

I just finished reading *Sister of the Road: The Autobiography of Boxcar Bertha,* by Dr. Ben Reitman, which AK Press recently republished. I've been anticipating this book since I read mention of it by a woman train-hopper in a zine a few years ago. The story is about a woman in the early part of the century, brought up around radical thought and free love, during a time of desperation for many. Through the 20s and 30s, Bertha travels as a hobo across country—hitchhiking, and hopping trains, always trying to learn a bit more in life. She spends time with revolutionary thinkers at anarchist meetings and hobo colleges, and crosses paths with the bohemian underbelly of radical free-thinkers of the time. She gets caught up in with a group of thieves, spends time in brothel, and does a lot to compile information about other women hobos, travelers, and radicals. This was an amazing story which left a lasting impression and got me prepared for delving into Emma Goldman's autobiography. This one also made me think of Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz's *Outlaw Woman: A Memoir of the War Years, 1960-1975,* published last year, mostly just because of the shared topic of rad women involved in counter-culture and radical politics. Roxanne is an amazing woman who was very active in the 60s and 70s in the anti-war movement as well as in the early part of the women's liberation movement. Her life has truly been amazing and the stories that she has to tell of being hunted by the Feds for her involvement in radical politics can serve as inspiration to us all to fight for that which you believe in. These two are among my favorite books ever and I highly recommend both!

So I'll end this with just a few more favorite writers—all of whose books I can easily recommend. Chris Bohjalian. Rohinton Mistry, and Charles De Lint. As a book fanatic, it's pretty hard to summarize all of my favorites in one short column, and I had actually planned to write about the recent ones I'd read, but the all-time favorites seemed to be more suited to the time. Don't forget about *Despite Everything,* the *Cometbus* anthology that came out this past fall. That is a massive brick of a book that compiles the best of the last 20 years of my—and so many others'—very favorite zine. It's awesome!! Happy reading. If you've read something great that you want to recommend—write to me and tell me about it.

Chris(tine) c/o Slug & Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond VA 23261-6632

Married With Records



I got email from Chowderhead. It was probably about that trade. We had been trying to work it out for some time. A few years ago, I had found this rare record at a KUSF swap. Some guy from the East Bay who had apparently been dumped by his girlfriend was depressed and decided to sell some records. Strange. Usually poor saps go out and *buy* records when that happens. Anyhow, I guess he had spent some time in the Boston area because he had this record that I was unfamiliar with but its picture sleeve was very handmade and punk looking. It was a two-piece with primitive oddball photo collage graphics. Virtually no information on the sleeve, tho the inner label of the record would betray its Beantown origin. The guy wanted $10, which was sort of a lot to blow on a record I had never heard of, but then I remember passing on the TITS 45 for $8 at a KFJC record swap a decade ago because I hadn't heard of it. I think I listened to it once. When I made my occasional trip to Portland, OR, I brought it up there and stuck it in storage with the rest of my belongings.

So after I had decided to trade it away to Chowderhead, it took a while for me to get it back out of storage. It may have even taken a year or two. Anyhow, it was finally out and we were trying to determine the trade. We did this by email.

"Any thoughts on the trade?" Chowderhead wrote.

"What's up, C ?" I replied.

"Well, a lot!" he wrote. "I got married this past weekend!"

"Holy! Congratulations man! And instead of consummating the marriage, you're trying to consummate record trades? Jeez..."

"Well, consummating record trades general takes more than 30 seconds..."

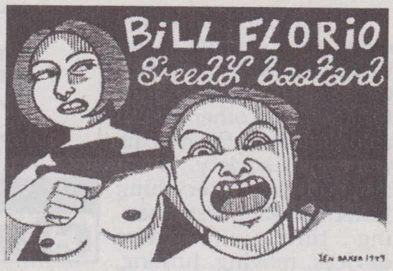
Get Used To It

Jim Jocoy's *We're Desperate* is a wonderful glossy nightstand book that nicely captures the visual stun of the first-gen West Coast punks. Jocoy's polaroids capture art-damaged, junkied, bed-headed, on-the-fringe-and-beyond misfit characters that were the early punk scene. Beautiful people did not exist. The finely tuned punk uniform did not exist. The art crowd infused aesthetic and anti-fashion and revelled in lurid ugliness. Snot remains unblown, earwax caked, pupils dilated. While you get spoonfuls of luminaries from the day, plenty of people in the book are just scenesters and stragglers.

Dischord Box

20 Years of Dischord can be heard over a series of 3 CDs and read over a thick ass CD-sized book all handsomely housed in a sturdy cardboard box. Since I found it impossible to keep up with all the Dischord releases after the first dozen or so, this represents a great overview over its 100 plus releases over the past 20 years, since it democratically opts to go for breadth over depth. "Screaming at a Wall" is the only Minor Threat song on the two-disc retrospective, along with only one track each from the early singles by bands such as Teen Idles, SOA, and Government Issue. The hardcore crudely rendered by Teen Idles and Untouchables as pure adolescent male rant are quickly upstaged by more sophisticated shards of the genre, and ultimately gives way to beyond-hardcore. Disc 3 is the really cool shit, all unreleased, mostly of the early era. The earlier, slower version of Teen Idles' "Get Up and Go" is so much better, you lament why the faster-is-better teenage boy bullshit got the better of their senses. Disc 3, if you play this on your computer, also has some primitively shot video clips, including a pre-Rollins Henry Garfield growling and air guitaring in an early SOA performance that is massively entertaining. The book has tons of great photos and stories. OK, Touch and Go, it's your turn...

Send shit to Henry 4309 23rd St., San Francisco, CA 94114 and I'll cover it as always.



For some strange reason in the early 90s I thought I should use my video skills for something other than weddings and Bar Mitzvahs. This guy named Johnny Murphy used to come around every month to make copies of tapes. Johnny was a little out of his mind, like one of the regulars at those Irish pubs with the Guinness signs and the copper-sheet facade. You know, those places with big leprechaun statues out front and underage girls getting picked up by middle-aged men. So, anyway, Johnny Murphy is a private investigator. Which basically means he's a cop that got caught taking a piss on a homeless person or smoked crack on the job once or twice. He pretty much would do anything from following around your cheating husband to outright bounty hunting. Anyhow, this guy was nice enough, but he had no idea how to use a video camera. I'm not talking about in an artistic sense here, where his rack focus was not in correct time, I'm talking about "Oh shit, I forgot to put a tape in."

So, he starts talking to me one day, when he asks me what sort of video camera I own. He asks if I'd be interested in helping him out with some new jobs he got from a big insurance company. See, if you make a claim, an insurance investigator shows up and questions you and basically gets some extra bonus if you're caught trying to pull one over on the insurance company.

My dog Sneakers bit this kid Steven Mizerdenski's nose off when I was ten. My dog was a Llasa Apso that weighed 12 pounds. Steven Mizerdenski was a whiny Pollack kid that shit his pants every 15 minutes to the point that my second grade teacher had to make an announcement that whoever was blowing smoke out of their rear end all day should please refrain from doing it in her corner of the room. Anyhow, he came over my house one day to play Atari and was petting my dog. Sneak (also known as Booger) had just gotten his hair cut, and whenever the groomer shaved him he would spend the next three days or so biting his razor burned balls until they were beet red. So, Sneakers wasn't so happy about getting a rubdown by a loud smelly kid, so he lunged at his face and poor Steve's nose got lost in the battle.

Anyhow, a few weeks later the insurance investigator came over to interview us and take pictures of my dog. Which was pretty funny since my dog was usually too lazy to even bark. He took a few pictures of him rolling in the grass and looking cute and a quick settlement got Steve a lifetime supply of beano.

This is what usually happens when bad things happen to good people. You pay your insurance or whatever comes out of your paycheck and if God forbid anything goes wrong, there's cash waiting for you. Now, if that initial investigator comes over and deems you a scumbag, they go on to phase 2. Phase 2 includes Johnny Murphy. Basically an investigator from the insurance company tracks you on paper and if it really looks sketchy, he actually follows you around. If he sees you up to something you shouldn't be on a daily basis, he sends good old Johnny to catch you on tape. Anyhow speaking of scammers, Johnny Murphy only came to make copies for $15 a pop where I worked because he liked me and was too cheap and dumb to buy two VCRs and make his own copies. Plus for every $15 he gave me, he would charge the Insurance Company $60. I knew this because I dummied up the receipts for him.

So, since I had a better camera and actually knew how to use it, I agreed to help Johnny with some of his trails. Basically, we'd both follow a certain suspect in two cars and if one of us got spotted (or worse) the other would get it on tape.

The first job involved a cop who was collecting major disability for a back injury he got on the job. So we followed him for three days. The first day, he worked at some magazine warehouse lugging big boxes of paper on to trucks for six hours. The next day he bought a huge ass $5000 motorcycle that he was way too short to even have any business riding. When he pulled out of the dealership he pulled out of a gas station and totally wiped out turning into the pump. His stupid sunglasses went flying, he scratched the shit out of the paint and jumped right up and lifted the huge bike and got right back on. I was thinking, wow this job is great! The cop claimed that he was housebound and could barely get out of bed in the morning.

The second job was some old millionaire codger. We actually got out of the cars and followed him around a golf course. I think he was claiming whiplash on a fender bender or something, and he pulls scams all the time. I don't think that's how he became a millionaire, I think he's just old and bored and liked making money the old fashion way, not earning it. The guy was even too cheap to get a caddy and was carrying his own bag.

OK, up to this point it seemed like a good way to make extra money, maybe if I had pursued this career outside of Johnny it would have been great. Which leads me to the third and final job.

The third job was a shrimpy guido guy with no neck. I can't remember exactly what we were following him for, but he was also collecting disability and working for cash at some plumbing warehouse, (luckily it wasn't the one my dad worked for). Anyhow this guy is very small, and we can't get a shot of him doing much from the car. So me and Johnny position ourselves in high grass on either side of the warehouse. There's sort of a high earth wall around the place and we're laying on our bellies shooting down into the warehouse windows. Several times the guido guy and his illegal immigrant co-workers are facing right into my camera lens. I must say it was a little creepy. If I was Steven Mizerdenski, I think I would have actually shit my pants.

The next day was Saturday and we're staked out at the little guido's house. I'm in a Burger King parking lot which is one fence away from the side of the guy's house and Johnny is right out front. Little mini-me guido is working on his roof. Painting the window sills and cleaning out the gutters and all that good shit, and after an hour or so he goes downstairs to eat lunch. The next thing I know Johnny is on the CB yelling, turn yer camera on, he's coming out the front door. Five seconds later, Mr. Pinto Cugine is bashing in Johnny's car windows with a baseball bat. After taking out the back window and the small side window he suddenly realizes that he's totally busted, and freaks out and starts crying and runs into the house.

The next day I told Johnny, I'd really love to keep working for him, but I can't afford the insurance premiums.

Friday, December 6th

oh man,
what
the
fuck
??!?!
wells anarchy!
DS-13

The day started shitty and ended shitty. But on Long Island the nights in December start at about 4:30. So, at least it wasn't a long day. And I had plans for later, too. Not bad.

The idea for the night was to catch up with my pal Andre. His band, BISTRO COSMOPOLITAN, was playing a show over at the university. I hadn't heard them yet, but there was an overwhelming chance that I wasn't going to like them. Not because they were going to be crummy, but more because I just don't really like much of anything.

So I headed over to my parents' house to pace around for a few hours before the show. My brother was there. His buddies and he were scheming up their plans for the night. The idea there was to hit Sullivan B's. As far as I could tell the place was a meatmarket for washed up 20-something popular kids. It was supposed to be *off the hook*. They had heard a radio commercial advertising that ladies would drink for free. Sweet. Ladies.

So a strange logic started to consume me. I'm a miserable dude, I figured. I've been a miserable dude at the university tons of times. But at ol' Sully B's? Never. Fuck it. I might as well be miserable somewhere new. What's the worst that could happen? Well, I guess overwhelming feelings of terror and doom, followed by a painful death. But that wasn't likely! I was going to spend my night among my upwardly mobile 20-something peers, pulsating to the beat of the same drum, and drinkin' designer booze! That was that. I decided to head out with these clowns.

Caste of Clowns

Kit Tipley: He's the brother of me. He's two years my junior and a ten-year veteran of scholastic football. After graduating college with a degree in "Community Health" he promptly moved home and began slinging booze at the bar my family owns. Mario's, it's called. Like the rest of my family, he's Irish. This guy is jacked, reasonably good-looking, and gets a modest share of attention from girls. Despite all this, he operates his life as an impressive geyser of self-deprecation and inward criticism. The guy is fucking comedy.

Heath Madom: He's the best friend of my brother. He lives in New York City and teaches 7th Grade English. I can't remember the last weekend he didn't commute an hour and a half to come back to our hometown and hang out with my brother. They sit around all weekend watching movies, eating pizza, and complaining about themselves. Heath is super-smart and into lefty books and stuff. He wears glasses. He's a critical dude; a misfit smarty-pants.

Myles Tipley: He's the cousin of my brother and me. He's a year younger than Kit and three years younger than me. He also slings booze down at Mario's. He's pretty wicked on the wheels of steel. He DJs mostly old school and underground hip hop. The guy probably has about 100 times more shoes than he does feet. For Christmas he wound up getting an Adidas warm-up suit and some Run DMC action figures. He's got a cell phone. His girlfriend calls him on it. He's tall.

Mike "Pops" Papalardo: This guy did some time on the football team with my brother in high school. After that he played at the college I went to. Every time I saw him for years he would yell the name of our college out and try to high-five me. I'm not really sure if he was joking or not. Either way, I was never much into it. A few months ago he finally stopped.

Wardrobe

I put some thought into what I was going to wear. What I ultimately came up with was what I thought of as a sort of *Jason Lee* look. Really, it had more to do with the fact that it was all I could muster than a particular affinity for his style. Jason Lee used to be a skateboarder and now he's a movie star Scientologist. The look was simple. My boots were the maroon Doc Martens like the Vulture Rock Records' vulture wears. My pants were khaki and a little too big. I wore a long sleeve thermal underwear top, and over it was an Izod type shirt like the guy from CHARLES BRONSON used to wear. It was a little too small. But not as small as how that guy used to wear his. That was my outfit. I didn't wear a jacket. I figured this was passable in an Abercrombie and Fitch kind of way, but still had some punk credibility to it.

Sullivan B's

So, we headed out to Sully B's. It was the five of us. Myles and I were in my car, and the rest of those dudes in another. As we rolled up on the club we saw lights in the sky. We proceeded through another traffic light as I realized that the lights were coming from a huge truck with oscillating spotlights pointed toward the sky. It was on the front lawn of Sullivan B's. Fucking hot. I started hollering about how mint it was that we were going to a bar that was important and festive enough to warrant spotlights like the Oscars. I was pumped.

The parking lot wasn't as festive as the lights would lead you to believe. There were about seven cars there and a sad-looking bouncer next to a sign that sort of begged, "Ladies Drink Free." It was past 11 pm and there was fucking nobody at this place. But we trudged on. Through the doors we went, promising that we'd only stay for one beer. The bouncer smirked at me like he would have turned around at the parking lot if he was me.

So there we were. The square footage of this place was fucking staggering. There were two bars, huge dance floors, tables, booths, and billiards; it was fucking nuts. As my brother and his buddies ordered Amstel Lights, I tried to calculate how much money the promoter was going to lose that night. I got a stomachache.

Back To The Parking Lot

As I passed that same fucking bouncer, I was all but sure I'd be heading over to the university to see BISTRO COSMOPOLITAN. Andre. Sweet. "Napppp-uuhhhhz," I heard somebody shout. I'm not sure how I knew what that meant, but I did. And I'm not sure why, but I also knew it meant I wasn't going to the university. *Nappuhz* is how we pronounce Nappers here on Long

Island. Nappers. Fuckin' a. This is a place my brother and his friends go to sometimes. It's called Napper Tandy's and it's on a street in Smithtown that has like four or five bars right in a row. So, somebody was suggesting we go there. Hot.

Now, I've passed this place on the way to the theater that shows year-old movies for two bucks, but I've never been inside. I can tell you that from the outside I've seen staggering frat boy stereotypes shouting at cars, and girls with tons of make-up shuffling out of the bar in the dead of winter with no coats on.

I imagined that this place was all that Sullivan B's was supposed to be and more… and hopefully with people this time. So, that was that, I was going to Napper Tandy's.

Smithtown: Volkswagen

Smithtown is pretty doable as far as my little driving phobia goes. I asked my brother to ride with me, and I figured I'd be OK. In hopped Pops. That's what my brother calls that guy Mike Papalardo who was with us. This freaked me out a bit, but not too bad. Before I knew it I was rolling into the second parking lot of the night. This time there were no oscillating spot lights, but there was a fucking ass-load of cars. On the walk up to the bar we had some exciting pre-game talk about what we would hypothetically do and say to the girls we were going to meet. Kit and Pops also reminisced a bit about how they used to drink a bunch of beer in the parking lot before going in to the bar. Apparently it was an economic issue.

Napper Tandy's

They used some kind of x-ray machine to check out if my license was real. It was neat and I felt young. Once I got past that, there was nothing but a sea of people. From what I could tell, most everybody was looking sort of nondescript and half-attractive. It was weird. It was hard to tell who knew each other and who didn't.

The place was set up like a big long hall. On the right there was a row of awkwardly shaped booths. They were made of pretty nice-looking wood and brass-like metal. Maybe it was brass. Along the left side was this huge bar with like five or six bartenders behind it. It looked like a mess to get a drink. In the middle was a row of totally unusable (due to the sheer mass of people) tables stretching toward the back. The floor was wood. In the back it got particularly weird. There was a DJ booth raised above a dance floor. There was sort of a laser light show going on, and there were black lights. People were dancing like crazy. When I paid attention for more than a few seconds I would unavoidably see guys approaching girls that they obviously didn't know. It was astounding.

I went to the bathroom to take a whiz. This guy turned around from his stall and looked at me ,shocked.

"Did you see that guy," he asked me.

Before I could answer he said, "He was wearing moccasins!"

I had no idea how to respond to that. I'm not even sure what the fuck sort of thing that was to say. Luckily, before I could figure out what the fuck was going on, the guy had left. I started to pee. It was weird.

Jackets, Haircuts, and Orange Shirts

I met back up with Kit, Heath, and Myles. Pops was getting some booze for everybody. I had him get me a bottled water. At this point we had already isolated ourselves in a booth.

My eyes were darting around the place looking at girls. My hope was that there was a girl there for me. Maybe we'd date and get married. The way I saw it, she'd have to be there like me, with some friends who were "into this kind of thing." I was looking for the closet punker girl who got dragged here. Fat chance, but what the fuck?

I scoped out two girls. One was called Orange Shirt. She had a normal kind of shirt on. Not too dressy. She wasn't wearing a lot of make up. She looked slightly out of place. Her friend was bleached blonde and had tons of make-up on. Her boobs were huge and shoved into a sequin halter-top. It kind of looked like ten pounds of potatoes in a five-pound sack. They were a weird duo. But I was intrigued.

The second girl looked more out of my league. I called her Haircut. She was hella pretty, and had a hip haircut. It was black and short in the back. It was asymmetrical and had angles. Her clothes were fancy but kind of hip or *alternative* looking.

I was thinking about whether Haircut was actually hip, or just looked it, when a mildly attractive girl came up to Heath and me. Before I got my hopes up she asked if she could leave her jacket by us.

Heath said, "Can my friend wear it?"

He said it in a funny kind of way like it was a half a pick-up line or something. She walked away. Kit and Myles sort of taunted her with the word jacket.

"Jacket, jacket," they mumbled in varying creepy tones so she could hear.

This wasn't going well. We spent the next half hour talking to nobody but ourselves and mostly about different scenarios of absurd things we could do with the girl's jacket.

Fuck

Finally, something happened. A couple of girls we knew from working at Mario's appeared. I had to kiss them on the cheeks, and was pretty bummed about it. I hate that shit.

They had a friend with them who had her hair down to her ass. That was some long hair. If I were a superficial dude, I'd have to say she was busted. Dull too, she was. I somehow wound up talking to her all by myself. Fuck.

In a desperate attempt to free myself from the situation, I eked out, "I'm going up to the bar."

As soon as I said it I realized the ramifications. There was a sentence that fucking absolutely had to follow that one. Totally fucking amateur mistake, I guess.

"Do you want anything?" I asked her.

Fuck. Now I'm buying her a drink. "I'll take a water. Thanks!" Fuck.

I made my way over to the bar. What a fucking debacle that was. At the bar some girl I saw making out with some guy on the dance floor was making out with some totally different guy. She stopped long enough to criticize my technique of getting the bartender's attention. I half tried to be charming but it was all wrong. Fuck. I wondered if maybe I'd be making out with her later. Not likely.

Finally I get my two bottled waters.

"No charge for water," the bartender says. Sweet.

I meandered back to the girl. She was all by herself. Fuck. "Oh, thanks. Tap water would have been fine. What do I owe you?"

I smirked to myself, and just so I could tell my brother the story later, I said, "Oh, no sweat, don't worry about it." I emphasized, "that one's on me."

With any luck, she ordered one later and realized they were free. Fuckin' a.

Do You Drink Your Pee Pee, Hee Hee Hee Hee

After this fucking mess, I set out to find my pals. When I found them, Kit and Heath were at the corner of the dance floor just looking at people. Myles and Pops were a few feet away in front of the black light dancing.

I guess Pops wasn't so much dancing as he was pointing to his teeth. In front of the black light his few fake teeth were shining really bright and obvious. Myles was doing this dance that involved brushing his head and shoulders with his hands. Apparently besides fake teeth, dandruff was really obvious in the black light too. These guys seriously looked stupid.

Amused in a sort of desperate way, I hit the head again. I walked in with this other guy who looked kind of familiar. We saddled up at the two stalls right next to each other. It took me longer to start peeing than him, and I was done quicker. It's always like that. It makes me feel like a little kid. Anyway, who was this dude? I was leaving and he was still peeing, that's when I remembered. I saw this kid sing in hardcore band like five or six years ago. I remember that he was like 14 or 15 then. They totally fucking raged. It was at a youth center somewhere and I FARM played. Now the dude had on a white ribbed tight turtleneck with a gold chain showing on the outside. The whole thing sent me into an existential crisis.

I think it was right about at this point that I gave up. Defeated. Beaten. I was housed. I had nothing to lose at this point. This is what Pete Baney is talking about when he shrugs his shoulders and says, *life*. And this is when I went for it.

Haircut

"You know what man? Fuck this," I started to explain to Heath, "What the fuck is this place?" The rest of the conversation was a blur, but somehow my ranting and raving delivered me to a conclusion.

"You know what man? Fuck this. I'm talking to girls."

I couldn't find Orange Shirt, but I was about four feet away from Haircut.

My feet got hot and my left hand went numb. I tapped her on the shoulder with my good hand. She turned around.

"Excuse me, I like your haircut," I said as I found myself pointing at her head.

"Thanks," she said. Haircut and her friend looked at me like I was weird. They were right.

"Is it new?" I pressed on.

They both sort of giggled. "No, I got my hair cut like two weeks ago."

This was a trainwreck. It wasn't going well. I think I might have back-pedaled. I looked her right in the eyes and said, "I'm sorry, I've never talked to a girl before."

They erupted with laughter. Haircut's friend seemed to be laughing at me, but Haircut herself seemed kind of intrigued.

"My name's Cynthia," she said.

Holy shit. What the fuck was this? How did that line work? I told her my name. It was Wells. We said stuff like *nice to meet you*. I think we may have talked about my name. It was going well. The next thing I remember is Haircut asking me a question.

"How come you're only drinking water?" she said.

The night sort of stopped. I could have taken the conversation in one of any number of ways at this point. I thought back to the few moments before when this conversation was really in the shitter. That feeling wasn't really *that* excruciating. I thought back to the state of beaten-down defeat that I was in. It was true; I really had nothing to lose. This girl could take nothing from me. And I thought back to the busted longhaired girl. I had gained a modestly funny story to tell from that conversation. Fuck it. That was it. I was going to say it.

"I'm sorry, what?" I asked her, turning my head like I didn't hear what she had said the first time.

"How come you're only drinking water?" she said again.

"Oh, I'm several medications for severe and chronic depression and anxiety," I said nodding my head and pursing my lips kind of matter-of-factly.

The night sort of stopped again. Only this time, there was no internal dialogue, just the deafening sound of dues being paid for a good story.

All in slow motion I see Haircut's friend roll her eyes and start to turn away. Haircut's head started to tilt back. Fuck, what does this mean? All of the sudden everything slammed back into regular speed. Haircut was laughing. And pretty hard too.

"Oh my god you're so funny!" she said. "That's so cute."

"Sure it's funny to you, I live like this everyday," I said with a straight face.

There was more laughing from Haircut, more sighing and eye-rolling from her friend, and total amazement from Heath, who by now had been looking on.

Me and Haircut talked for a few more minutes before her friend dragged her off. As that was happening, Haircut apologized and explained that she had to go over to the horse and jockey. She kissed me on the cheek. I smiled politely, hiding an amazed smirk, and said my goodbyes. I was stupefied by the whole experience

"What the fuck horse is she going to?" I asked my brother, in a daze.

'It's a bar a few doors down," my brother said. "The Horse and Jockey."

Pops wound up having to explain to me how that was actually an invitation from Haircut to follow her there a bit later. Holy shit. Sweet.

Orange Shirt

As is his trademark, Heath left early. He was tired. That left me, Kit, Myles, and Pops. I caught sight of Orange Shirt. She was standing next to her friend taking a break from dancing. I could do anything at this point. I was gearing up to talk to her when Pops caught sight of the situation. He started to make his way over there. I saw where that was going to go. He was going to sell me out. I had to think quickly. I positioned myself between him and her.

"I'm sorry," I blurted out. It was the best I could come up with. "My brother's asshole friend is going to come over and talk to you about how I've been checking you out."

It didn't have the dorky charm of the whole Haircut conversation, but I was talking to her. She, however, was not amused.

"Umm, he's a real dick," I said.

It took about 45 seconds for me to figure out two things about her. First, she loved dancing to hip-hop. A lot. She told me about it. Second, she was overwhelmingly dull.

I inquired about hip-hop and pointed to Myles and said, "That's my cousin, he DJ'd a party once that J-ZONE rapped at." Then I left for the bathroom.

Stickers

Everybody was bombed. It must have been like two in the morning. Kit was bumping into people on purpose just to be a dick. We found a stack of free stickers that a radio station was giving away. We got about seven or eight on Pops' back without him realizing. We were housed. As we made our way towards the door, it was just about as crowded as it was when we first got there. Kit caught site of Jacket and made some incoherent comment.

When we were paying our tab, Pops tried saying goodbye to Haircut's friend, who for some reason was still there. He strung together a few sentence that could really only be interpreted as annoying and rude. After that he tried to get me to pay for the water he "bought" me.

A few feet into the cold outside, I felt a hearty push that sent me flying about four or five feet. Before I could turn around I heard, "Sorry I'm not a Tipley. I'm not cool enough to hang out without stickers on me." Pops had found the stickers and his drunk feelings were hurt. We all resolved that by just short of having a drunken group-hug and "I love you, man" freak out. Jeez.

We stumbled in and out of a few more bars and hollered at some cars. With each bar we hit, the night lost some of its charm, and I lost money on cover charges. It was getting boring; and expensive. We talked some girls into sticking stickers on Myles' back. We almost got into a fight with some dude who doesn't like folks looking towards his girlfriend. Pops dirty-danced with some girls. But the night was over. We knew it. Shit just kind of petered out. No big climax. No finale. We packed up and headed home. Nappuhz.

Epilogue

The last bar we went to was the Horse and Jockey. Haircut, which is a much easier name to remember than Cynthia, was there and we *did* talk for a bit. It really wasn't that much fun, and I didn't see much of a future with me and this beautiful girl. I left without saying goodbye. Myles, Kit, and Pops all swear that I probably could have gotten her number. But, what the fuck, anyway? Why for? The magic was gone and I already had my story. And something else too. I had realized the kind of power that only comes with total defeat and fed-up-edness. It was just short of epiphany: I could talk to girls. Sweet. From now on I could do it. And I would too. On Saturday, December 7th, I asked a girl out. That's a true story. And it never would have happened without Friday, December 6th.
Next month, Saturday December 7th!

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The Punk Rocker Mental Illness Pen Pal Network is up and running. If you are looking to connect with someone to write back and forth with about Mental Illness, send over your info, and I'll hook you up with a pen pal. The contact information is below.

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Past "Oh Man What The Fuck!?!??!" columns are available on the web at www.trafficviolation.com.

I like your haircut: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or email me at wells@trafficviolation.com.

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END NOTES:

1. Personal Ads. I'm about a month away from doing a personals ad, or at least answering one. This is disturbing because my time-line of last resorts had it scheduled for like two years from now. Fuck.
2. Does anyone have a list of exactly what you can and cannot replicate on the Replicators on *Star Trek*?
3. Pat Schramm's life sucks. But LATTERMAN is posi, so he can't really talk about it.

4. This column is four days late. I'm fucked.

Scott Soriano
Rama Lama Fa
Fuck You

One does not need eye of newt and the blood of a young virgin to have predicted the current mainstreaming of punk rock. A look at the history of rock 'n' roll, especially that of the last 20 years, shows that the music industry is very adept at coopting musical trends, no matter how obnoxious they might be. To think that one's fave music is immune to exploitation just because it is loud and fast and the musicians sneer shows complete ignorance of the music industry's practice of marketing rebellion. From Alice Cooper to the Geto Boys, from the Doors to Marilyn Manson, the music industry has had much success with the more devilish practitioners of the Devil's music. It is not as if the Rolling Stones are paupers.

It is also not as if Green Day didn't make it big a mere ten years ago. Granted Green Day are not the Mentors, but neither are the current wave of punk superstars. The garage trinity—the White Stripes, the Hives, and the Vines—are anything but threatening. I would have Jack and Meg White over my mom's house for dinner and I doubt the Hives' hijinks go beyond basic American frat boy. Musically, punk rock is about recycling, so there is never anything really new that the public has to deal with. 1-2-3-4 and/or a slide guitar is not a challenge.

Step back a bit more and punk rock's recent rise becomes even more logical. Punk is, after all, a reaction. The genre's political left and the Brits like to claim that punk is rebellion against the injustices in society, specifically the notion that we live in a dead end society in terms of class and culture. Punk's small right wing likes to assert that the music is a return to a "simpler time," the mythological past of 1950s teen rebels without a cause. While there might be a tiny germ of truth in either argument, both ignore punk's big bugaboo.

From 1960s teen garage bands on, punk rock has always reacted strongest to boredom. As the Adolescents once sang. "We're the wrecking crew/Bored boys with nuthin to do." Until the election of Ronald Reagan, boredom was the single biggest topic of punk rock. It was punk's main criticism of society. The ultimate punk insult was to be called "boring."

Boredom has also been one of the chief complaints of suburban youth. It is no surprise that the rise of hardcore punk coincides with the maturation of the first nationwide wave of suburban youth. Prior to 1965, only parts of America were stricken with suburbia. When many government jobs went west, particularly those in the defense industry, so did the people and with those people came new housing. In the West, where land was plentiful and cheap, new housing meant sprawl. Sprawl means suburbia. By 1965, the West had embraces suburbia, as had the South. When the late 70s came around, there was an army of bored suburban youth looking for something to latch onto. That something was punk rock. The bored energy and basic apoliticalness of suburban youth was to make that punk rock hardcore.

Fast forward to today and nothing has changed except that there are a hell of a lot more suburbs and with them, more bored kids. The industry that neglected hardcore has now embraced whatever music teens deem as rebellious. That thousands of independent labels and distributors made money in the 80s hardcore movement did not escape the music industry. And the fake sneers and funky hair styles did not scare them away. Like punks who recycle old Eddie Cochran riffs, the music industry brushed off their hip and started employing house punkers, as well as house gangstas and house goths and house headbangers and house ragerockers. The industry remembered that their biggest all time money making band—the Rolling Stones—were also the poster boys for Satan and all that was wrong in the world. Compared to the straight public's revulsion to the Stones' drug orgies and sex romps, what's a little Fred Durst and Tommy Lee? The Born Again Christians are gonna get pissed: so what? They don't buy records anyway.

The music industry also clued in on reaction. As capitalist as the money men in music are, they certainly know their Marx. If, for every action there is a reaction, and, if there is a reaction to the initial reaction, a reaction that synthesizes the initial action and the initial reaction becomes the new mainstream. Yeah, I know that sounds muddles so let me use rock 'n' roll to illustrate:

We start off in the 1940s. The mainstream is Tin Pan Alley—parent approved, lily white crooning, jingles, and show tunes. The reaction is early rock 'n' roll, a raw combo of urban blues (R&B) and country (rockabilly). The synthesis is show biz rock 'n' roll—RCA era Elvis, Fats Domino, Chubby Checker, Ricky Nelson, etc. Show biz rock 'n' roll becomes the norm, the new standard to rebel against. It's challenger is 60s R&B and R&B-influenced teen garage rock (and raw Brit beat). The synthesis of show biz rock and R&B/garage/beat is Motown and the Beatles.

The reaction to Motown and the Beatles comes in soul and psychedelia. The synthesis is sugar soul and Bubblegum. Rebels react with funk and heavy metal/glam. The synthesis is disco and classic rock. The reaction is rap and punk. And it goes on.

We can argue about the terms and when reactions occurred, but the point is that the development of rock 'n' roll or pop music is a chain of actions, reactions and synthesis, or, in Marxist terms, a dialectic. Is important to note that one action can create a number of reactions and thus a number of synthesis. So, it is pretty easy to trace singer/songwriter and Whitney Houston-style balladry to folk music and cabaret's reactions to rock n' roll. It is even more important to remember that dialectics is a theory and that the real world evolution of rock 'n' roll is a bit messier than Marx would have envisioned. Also, as time goes on and communication becomes more and more instantaneous, the dialectical process speeds up. Change occurs in months rather than years.

So where does teen boredom come in? Well, since rock 'n' roll is largely concerned with boredom and boredom is contempt for familiarity, it is very important for rock 'n' roll to project a rebel image, an icon that is hostile to the familiar, if it is to survive. If the music industry that has latched itself to rock 'n' roll is also to survive, it must constantly find new rebels to market. It takes the rebels from the reaction to what is mainstream rock 'n' roll (or invents them). And whether they like it or not, once the industry has gotten a hold the reaction, the reaction becomes mainstream. Enter the "Saviors of rock 'n' roll": the White Stripes, the Hives, and the Vines.

Garage punk, as now represented by the three saviors, was one of the reactions to the mass popularity of Green Day and the Offspring and mainstreaming of punk . While garage punk has been around forever, post Green Day/Offspring, it was seen by many as a haven from Bubblegum punk (other havens included emo, crust/grindcore/power violence, sXe HC, and hardcore). For much of the 90s, garage punk was able to exist without much notice from outside. Within this genre, the White Stripes were able to form and grow along with the sound that was appropriated by the Hives (and later the Briefs).

Out in the real world, lots of little battles go on. Rock 'n' roll is the market force in the music industry and as such its soul is fought over. The fight is not just between the indie people and the industry, but between those who want rock to project a clean moral image and those who don't give a shit. It is also a fight between those who see rock as a cartoon and those who want it to be profound. And then there is sex and sexuality. So cartoon moral force Britney Spears becomes a sex symbol and cartoon degenerate Marilyn Manson is profound and cartoon degenerate Kid Rock becomes a "sex symbol" and pisses on profundity and Bono stands above it all as cartoon philosopher with new fab hair.

Enough of the public looks at the above mess and thinks, "So much marketing, so many people trying to hard for style and image. We something real. We want authenticity!" The industry feels this rumble and starts the search. The first grab is from the past. Nothing is more authentic than the 60s, so let's resurrect the career of Carlos Santana. To make his 50+-year-old-with-orgasm-face guitar poses less creepy, we will team him with a smooth young hottie with a down to earth name—Michele Branch.

OK, so where else to look? England! Great Britain knows authenticity and the rage there is a band called the Strokes. And better yet, they are junkies from New York City. What is more authentic than that?

The young girls need something to counter Britney. Well, we just found us a guitar-playing mall rat named Avril Lavigne. Wow! with a name like that her parents are either hippies or Canadian—totally real. And she skateboards! How authentic is that?

Oh! Oh! Irony is authentic, isn't it? I mean, what if you are pretending you are a cartoon degenerate and everyone knows you are pretending so everyone is in on the joke. That's authentic, isn't it? I mean, if we live the lie and we know it is a lie there really isn't any lying going down. We are just being real. Great! Turn up that Andrew WK!

But aren't we forgetting something? Rock 'n' roll is about music and we got to get to the roots if we are really going to be authentic. Really, we need someone to give the music back to the people. We need someone to save rock 'n' roll. Someone? Hell, I'll go one better than that. I'll go two better than that. Please welcome the new holy trinity of rock'n fuckin roll: the White Stripes, the Hives, and the Vines!!!

Rockers across the globe swoon when they turn through the pages of *Rolling Stone* and see pouty-faced Jack White bemoaning the White Stripes fame. How authentic! We don't care, scream the Hives. Ooooo! They *are* just like you and me. The Vines say, we just rip other bands off. You can't get more real than that!

Buck up—this New Authenticity will be dead soon. Just as young Avril has made the Goliath Britney fall, some plastic tart will jump up to slay the Avril beast. Some somber young hedonists will kill Andrew WK. Carlos Santana will drop dead from too many facial orgasms. And the Saviors of rock 'n' roll will fall from grace.

Luckily for them, where they are at in the music industry means that they will make some real money. While their shelf lives won't be long, their pocket books will always be full.

And if they really desire the spotlight, there will always be the *Hollywood Squares*.

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No, I won't answer your questions. You can contact me at scotts@sl.net. Want to send me stuff? Scott Soriano, 1114 21st Street, Sacramento CA 95814 USA. Please refrain from sending me your tour schedules, radio playlists, or other junk. And, hey, if you are Katie A from St Lou (or know her whereabouts), get a hold of me.

RaNSoM
NoTE$
by Erika Ransom

Pink and Blue

Winter grows bitter and drags on. War drums continue to sound in the distance; time passes filled with dark skies and rain. Cold air blows in from under the door and seagulls dance white-breasted into the wind. This month, my friends, enjoy a few words of rancor and discontent. I start the fire, and begin with an eerie story I heard last week, told by former President George H. Bush, Reagan's first successor.

George was cruising DC, giving a speech on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of NAFTA. The moneyed celebration was in honor of December 17, 1992, when President Bush, Mexican President Salinas, and Canadian Prime Minister Mulroney signed the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement and set the neo-liberal beast ablaze.

At 4 am, watching Bush on C-SPAN wax nostalgic over NAFTA was like watching a car crash, horrible and sick, but I couldn't turn away from the gore. The event was a small gathering, it didn't draw much noticeable press, and the former Prez was talking casually to his old supporters. Bush, I'm sure, did not realize I was watching.

I was struck by Bush's frank admission that NAFTA destroyed some 800,000 jobs in the US alone. Bush said he sympathized, but, hey, that's "the cost of progress." And what is that cost, for so much corporate profit? I'm sure the automotive workers of Flint, Michigan and the corn farmers of Mexico would solidly agree. Globalization's "progress" is paid in blood and tears and broken towns.

I was also surprised that the aging Bush talked frankly about the Seattle anti-globalization protest of November 1999. He stammered, looked pissed off, and referred to all of the protesters as "anarchists" who "at least had the good taste to get a good cup of coffee at Starbucks while they were rioting." Just plain weird. Then, Bush lightened up and joked with the former leaders of Canada and Mexico, "I'm sure we all have our favorite protest story."

Here goes. Keep in mind that during Bush's term in office, the backlash against *Roe vs. Wade* was rapidly coming to a screaming crescendo. Right wing fanatics, spurred on by the "family values" rhetoric of conservative politicians and evangelist preachers, had already violently attacked several clinics and abortion providers.

Bush is telling his "favorite protest story" as a joke.

It begins as the official Presidential entourage is driving through San Francisco. A dummy car had been sent though the city first, in an attempt to thwart assassins and protesters alike. However, Bush said, a lone woman spotted his limo and ran toward the car carrying a sign.

"She was the homely type…actually, she was downright *ugly*," Bush said, prompting chuckles from the crowd.

"She was carrying a sign that read, 'KEEP OUT OF MY UTERUS."

Bush paused, and then delivered the punch line, "I said… '*No problem, lady!*'"

Ha ha ha, it's funny. Old white men in the audience laughed. Mrs. Bush with her white hair sitting in the front row laughed.

I didn't laugh, but watched, awestruck, by the bloodstains on the street. In 1992, while Bush was laughing at the "ugly" protester from the comfort of his limousine, there were 194 violent incidents reported at hospitals around the US. Only two years later, pro-life terrorists had murdered five clinic workers, and wounded several more.

Two women were killed at clinics not far from where I live, not all that long ago. On December 31, 1994, Planned Parenthood was in Brookline at the time, on historic, quiet, tree-lined Beacon Street. A man walked in and shot the receptionist, Shannon Lowney, 25, in the neck, shot other people and then escaped. Ten minutes later, the same man entered the nearby Preterm Health Services clinic with a rifle in a duffel bag and shot Receptionist Leanne Nichols, 38, at least five times before firing at other people and fleeing. Both women died that day.

Really fucking funny, Georgie boy!

I'm not surprised Bush is a sexist bastard who trivializes women fighting for their human rights. I suppose it was his flippancy, his offhanded manner that upset me, and burned the event into my memory. Bush, formerly one of the most powerful people in the world, treated women's rights as simply an annoyance on the way to somewhere else.

And so it goes. Sexism and violence against women remains a fundamental part of our culture, despite the fact that women can now wear pants in public and grow up to be astronauts. Abortion is an issue that should have been settled in 1973. It's a reproductive choice, end of story.

But it's not. During his election campaign in 2000, current President George W. Bush told the *USA Today*, "The FDA's decision to approve the abortion pill RU-486 is wrong…as president, I will work to build a culture that respects life." And in current politics, "life" is a keyword for a type of Christian fundamentalism that demands women serve, honor and *obey*.

And who is laughing now?

Well, Barbara anyway, right on cue, poor woman.

The weather turns, and the cold rain becomes snow.

Here is where I bring it all back to that glorious subject of Punk Rock. The days of boys and men using their girlfriends as coat racks while they go in the pit are not all that far gone, if they are gone at all.

Add more fuel, and feel the heat of acrimony.

Let me introduce one irritating, widespread example of prejudice and willful ignorance perpetrated by both men and women in punk. It's just this little thing people say, and the larger meaning behind it. I'm sick of it, so let me share.

Here goes. Many times someone has told me after my band has played, "I don't like women singers, but *you're* good."

Long pause on my end. What am I supposed to say to this? "Um, gee…thanks..." I'm usually stunned.

So many times I've heard people say this shit, bald-faced, without seeming to be insulting. The ironic thing is that they are usually trying to pay me a compliment, are trying to be *nice*. And, hey, what's so bad about a compliment?

The thing that isn't so *nice* is the subtext, the unstated but obvious flipside to, "I don't like women singers." It places all the hundreds of punk rock singers out there into only two camps: boy side and girl side. And boy is somehow better. There are countless male singers who suck, but does anyone ever say, "I just don't like *boy* singers?" No. I've never heard it, or read it in any fanzine. It would be a stupid thing to say.

The second part, "but *you're* good," only adds insult to injury. It means that somehow I've overcome the sad state of being a girl singer, and have graduated into becoming *almost* as good as a man. It's like the ultimate compliment I got from the boys when I was a "tomboy" in elementary school and the only girl tossing the football with them during free period, "You're just one of the guys." Oh, the salad days. I could run faster than the boys in my class, too. Guys were saying the same things back then, even before we all hit puberty, "Girls are stupid, but *you're* cool."

These days, I know better.

I recognize the code words for a sexist superiority complex just asking to be kicked in the nuts.

But, maybe people who say, "I don't like women singers…" are just missing out. Maybe they've only heard a few women singers and are basing their opinion on only a few people. They act like girl and women singers all sound the same. By the annoyed tone of voice, I imagine they think of girl singers as either a screaming artsy Yoko Ono, or a Britney Spears type ultra-femme who lost her soul somewhere two blocks back. I have no idea, but the distaste is clear, even couched in a *compliment* of all things. Maybe these folks just don't get out of the house all that often, or get to see good bands or buy decent records. But Jesus H. Christ, at least borrow a mix tape, play the radio, see a few bands, and get a life before you become so fucking judgmental.

Obviously, all women singers do not sound alike. Or, act or dress or think alike either. There is no global cabal.

Ha! Now I'm laughing. As things are so simple that I should have just drawn a stick figure diagram instead of wasting all these words, and all this paper and ink, too!

There are women and girls in punk, trash, and hardcore bands from all around the world. They sing, scream, yell, and carry a tune in as many different ways as there are individuals. I've heard women in bands sing like Broadway starlets and scream like demons from the bowels of hell, and perform every style in between. The range of vocal styles that women have employed is incredible. Think of the difference between Poly Styrene of X-RAY SPEX and the extreme growls of the original HARUM SCARUM lead singer. Live, I've enjoyed watching punk women singers with stage personalities that run the complete gamut of styles. Lynn Breedlove, the in-your-face butch singer of TRIBE 8, wore a strap-on and then cut it off with a huge knife. Jenny of the MIDNIGHT CREEPS donned high heels, glitter eye shadow, and garter belts while singing sadistic rock and roll. 86'D were straight-up tough New York hardcore. The list and variety of women performers is endless.

But how do we account for the ignorance of people who should know better, like record reviewers, whose job is to regularly listen to new music? More times than I can count I've read music reviews, even in this very magazine, that state, "I don't like girl singers…" It's confusing, really. Someone who has very good access to music should have a few more words in their critical descriptive vocabularies besides "boy" and "girl."

Some people argue that men and women singers just sound "different." Well, Fender and Gibson guitars sound different. Only a jackass would dismiss all the guitarists who play Fenders. For the most part, it's not what you play, but how you play it. No one says, "I just don't like Fenders, so I don't like your band." If a critic doesn't like the way the vocals sound, he or she should just say so. But boiling it down to gender is just insulting. It insults the reader who deserves a better description, and insults women by unfairly judging them as a group. Saying such things is just lazy writing, and much worse than that, it perpetuates fucked up stereotypes.

And so it goes.

Let's feed the flames one more time and raise our fervors as I avoid going out in the cold. Let the bile heat and bubble, and raise stinking sulfur to the surface.

I think one of the saddest things about sexism in our scene is the frequent invisibility of women, something punk shares with the rest of society. It goes along with women scientists not getting full credit for their discoveries, women politicians not getting the media coverage that men do, women artists having to struggle for the same recognition as men, and women's issues rarely making the national agenda.

Women and girls are everywhere making punk more fun, more artistic, more creative, more brutal, more organized and vibrant. Women and girl punks are putting out zines and records, and running labels and distros. Women are in bands from Japan to Sweden playing instruments and screaming their hearts out. Women are in the pit and fucking shit up. Women are everywhere. But then, why am I at a show, so many times wondering, "Where the hell are all the ladies?"

Last week I went to a show that had 18 bands or so on the bill. Fucking 18 bands were scheduled to play at the Chopping Block, a small dirty bar in Boston, from 2 pm to 2 am. It was a fun, rocking, drinking, messy affair, with the likes of KERMIT'S FINGER, JONEE EARTHQUAKE BAND, ZIPPO RAID, and CONFRONT all playing 15-minute high-energy sets. It was a perfect show for those of us with short attention spans and strong livers. But, out of that monster long lineup, I counted only one woman on stage the entire night. One.

During that moment of realization—which is all too often—I am always a little sad. One woman was on stage that night at the dive bar, out of about some 60 or so band members. Do you see what I mean now? How women in so many things are often missing from the picture?

I'm bet the show organizer didn't set it up to be a boy-fest on purpose, and I'm not out to make an example of him here. It's so common that women performers are left off the punk rock bill, especially at big shows, that it is far from unusual. Maybe show organizers just "don't like girl bands." But I doubt that's usually the case. I think it's more complicated than that, and also can parallel challenges that women and minorities face in the larger scheme of things.

For one thing, there just aren't as many women in bands. It's not as simple as, "Girls don't like being in bands as much as guys do," as many thoughtless people try to explain. I've thought a lot about this, and I think there are many possible reasons why. For example, I've noticed that in high school, when most of us start getting interested in punk, boys generally receive a great deal more encouragement from their parents and friends to be in bands than girls do. Many young boys get their first guitars for Christmas, or save up and buy them, and are asked by their guy punk friends to be in bands. I've read so many interviews where the lead singer said something like, "Yeah, I never thought about singing before, but my friends just asked, and then we got together, bla, bla, bla…" The boys practice in someone's parents' basement for a couple of years, eventually learn to play their instruments, and another punk band is born.

This doesn't happen as often for young girls. I know it wasn't that easy for me. Parents are generally more restrictive of girls, and the idea of little Susie getting into sex, drugs, and rock n' roll scares the crap out of them. Girls tend to have stricter curfews and limitations on being out late, especially when they're out with guys. It's unfair, but the norm. This double standard can really put a cramp on a girl's practicing, going to shows, and hanging out with the punks.

I also think girls can have a harder time finding bandmates, and supportive people to jam with, than boys do. High school is a time when society's prescribed gender roles are coming into full force, people start dating, cliques rule the day, and girls and boys are somewhat socially separated. Basically, high school sucks. All-girl bands, and bands-with-girls do form in high school—and rock hard—but tend to get together less often than all-boy bands. Why are so many girls left out? It happens. It sucks. I know it was true when I was a teenager, and I don't have a simple solution. I suppose we need to break down the sexist stereotypes of our society, for starters, and encourage more girls to pick up instruments and just start screaming.

Now, back to the show.

Besides the fact that there are fewer women in bands, it's more than a little odd that so many shows have hardly any women on stage. Sometimes, I think women in bands can be left out of the close-knit network of people and friends who put on punk shows. A few things women in bands can do is organize shows themselves, and let people who put together local shows know they're out there by giving out demos. If no one has heard of your band, you're not going to be asked to play. Another thing we can all do, to make sure women in bands get the respect and inclusion they deserve, is to be more aware of the shows we put together, and be more conscious of new bands who might need some help getting started. It takes more work than just booking the usual suspects, but it's worth it. C'mon, aren't 60 white guys on stage just a little boring? Please.

Jessie Drastic, bassist of THE ENEMY MYSELF, was the only woman performer on stage during that twelve-hour marathon show. And, it just so happens that she is amazing. Not because she is a woman, but because she is Jessie-who-rocks-out-on-the-bass. The ENEMY played a little longer than the guy who set up the show wanted, so he yelled at them and then shut off the PA. Jessie, punk as fuck, kept playing all by herself with a sardonic smile until he switched off the power to her amp.

Ha! Jessie makes me laugh at the world.

And here I end it. Everyone who imagines a better world without patriarchy and stupid stereotypes just has to just keep on playing, even when we get shut off. Women and men both have to shed the sexist crap that we've been fed all our lives and dare to try something radically different.

And to the next reviewer who says, "I don't like women singers…" Fuck you!

Much love, Erika
ransom@theprofits.org

Mykel Board sez: YOU'RE WRONG!

I like Negroes. Not every one, of course, but Negroes in general. Negroes as a race. Negroes as a group of people. Negroes as people different from other people, like Jews are different from other people.

I like the swagger, the self-confident walk of the tough young guys who know *you* will get out of the way. I like the way the girls hold their heads up and demand their rights, their space. I like the way they scare people just by existing. Make people cross the street to avoid them. Be just like punks used to be… without trying.

It's Sunday. I write this sitting in the coffee shop at the corner of Bleecker and Broadway. The height of brunch hour in Manhattan. Waiting for my Oriental Chicken Salad, a dish no self-respecting Negro would ever order, I look around me. There's not a Negro in the place. In fact, it's one of the whitest days I've seen down here. Even the spare-changing bum on the corner is white. An odd day to be writing about Negroes.

I look through the restaurant window at the street. The only colored person is a young man in a trench coat crossing briskly to the other side. His straight back, black cap, and precisely folded scarf say SOHO ARTIST. Maybe his skin is black, but he's sure no Negro. He's a downtowner, living a downtown life, walking purposefully to a downtown appointment.

I'll find Negroes at Wendy's across the street. They'll be eating burgers or working behind the counter, calling, *NEXT ON LINE.*

Once-in-awhile a white person works there. Someone with an accent. Usually Slavic. They don't last long. There's a solidarity among the counter servers, a back-and-forth joking, a repartee that a poor Russian immigrant is just not privy to.

Colored people are born with their identity. Unless they're very pale, they do nothing to *become* colored. There's no ritual. No circumcision. No initiation. If there's a change, it's to join another culture, build another identity. Being born a Negro is all there is to it. You are or you aren't.

But if it were only a question of birth, a bit of biology, darker skin, a wider nose, a bigger dick, a more perfectly spherical buttocks, it wouldn't fascinate me so much.

What fascinates me is that from almost nothing, from the lowest position, from slavery, Negroes have created a culture. From gospel to jazz to the bastard marriage with Country and Western we call Rock'n'Roll, to rap to hip hop. From backwards baseball hats to shaved heads to baggy pants. From graffiti to Kwaanza. Negroes have taken their slavery and fashioned it into a real culture.

Jews were slaves too, but we had Hebrew *before* slavery. Our culture didn't come from slavery. We flourished despite our problems, not because of them. Jews use THE HOLOCAUST as an excuse for everything from demanding a discount to murdering Arabs. Still, that does not *make* our culture. Zyklon B is not responsible for bagels or yentas.

Negro culture did not flourish despite slavery. It flourished *because of* slavery. It flourished because Negroes are America's only immigrants who didn't choose to be here. That makes them special. That gives them a moral right not to wear neckties and not to listen to Barry Manilow.

I laugh when I hear white guys complain about the salaries of Barry Bonds and Eddie Murphy.

"They're making too much. Can you imagine paying athletes that kind of money… and showbiz people?"

I'll decode: "Those are colored people's jobs. Being president of Microsoft… that's a white person's job. White people deserve lots of money. Colored people are… are… post-slaves, for G-d's sake! Why should they be making millions?"

But those corporate guys who own the teams and make the movies… those white guys… they *pay* millions. They know that Negroes can do what corporate whites can't. It just isn't part of white culture.

In the nature vs. nurture realm, I'm not much of a fan of nature. People blame all kinds of things on genes and chromosomes: alcoholism, gambling, the need to flush the toilet twice. Biology replaced the devil as "what made me do it." Of course, there are biological differences between Negroes and non-Negroes. They're not important—or clear.

That round Negress-butt? You know that sexy double quarter basketball? Is that nature? Or is it diet? Or maybe just a different way of looking at the world.

There's this girl I work with, a Negress. Every morning she comes in and unwraps her bacon-cheeseburger. My body tenses with pleasure as she takes off her coat and stretches her arms above her head. Those raised arms pull her tight little sweater just that far from the top of her pants. The brown flesh that shows in that space nearly makes me come.

Her small breasts counter-balance her rounded buttocks, like a human musical note. A quarter note. Her ass is the base of the note. Her spine is the note's spine. Her breasts are the tale that tells you it's a quarter note.

She doesn't eat the burger closed. She doesn't grab it like a fratboy, between two hands. She doesn't work her mouth around the whole gob. Instead, she opens the burger, like a book. She uses her thumb and middle finger to pick out the bacon. Her pink tongue reaches out to suck it into her mouth. She pulls it halfway in and closes her teeth gently around it, before touching her lips together. Only after she finishes the bacon, does she close the bun and eat the burger.

Some mornings, she brings in a little tupperware container. Filled with bacon. Just bacon. I hang around to watch her. She offers me some. I thank her, make some Jew reference, and continue watching her eat. I can't imagine a whitegirl eating like that.

****

"The trouble with you, Mykel," says the whitegirl, "is that you see everything through your own eyes and your fetish is supposed to be everyone's fetish."

We're at a Xmas dinner. I go every year. My pal L hosts it. L is an atheist, but she likes the gift-giving stuff, and appreciates a good dead goose. The discussion turns to me, as it always does. I've introduced my pro-Negro theory. The whitegirl disagrees.

"Mr. Big Alternativeguy," she continues, "it's so easy to say black people should just accept their alternativeness and they should be just like you."

She pauses to take a breath before continuing. "Try going down south and talking to the dirt poor, and then try telling those guys they should love their poverty and they should love the dirt they eat and they should be pleased they can't be bankers or stockbrokers and you'll see how long you'll keep your teeth."

The whitegirl often speaks in run-on sentences with lots of conjunctions.

"You don't get it," I tell her.

"I get it," she says. "You want everybody to be just like you and be so alternative and you can go to your ordinary job every day and jump back and forth from mainstream to alternative as you like and these people have no choice because they can't jump in and out of their skin color."

She takes another breath.

"Besides," she continues, "how can you be alternative if everyone is alternative? Then what are you alternative to? Why shouldn't people have a right to be normal if that's what they want and for people who can't do that, that *is* what they want."

"You don't get it," I tell her again.

"Oh no?" she says, "What I get is that you think you have the only way and you want everyone else to be just like you and when people don't want that and they choose to be like everybody else, you attack them. That's what I get, Mykel, or why don't you explain it to me?"

I sit there a bit stunned, but more in awe of her thick lips and the way her chest rises and falls underneath her thin black sweater.

"Ahemm, Mykel? Are you there, Mykel?" Her question brings me back to this particular time and place. I take a moment to consider what she says. She has a point, I admit... to myself. Admitting other people have a point is not something I do publicly.

"You don't get it," I start again. "I'm not saying people, Negroes or anybody else, should stay poor. I'm not saying people shouldn't have the *right* to be bankers, CEOs, or whatever the fuck they want to be. I'm not saying Negroes should accept their lot with a bunch of yowsahs and yez-mastas."

"Seems to me that's just what you're saying," she answers, "and..."

I cut her off.

"Nope," I continue, "what I'm saying is that the disadvantages of Negritude are clear. We need to fix them: laws, education, anything. Negroes should have the same opportunities as everyone else."

"Then, what's the point?" she asks.

"The point is," I continue, "that in many ways black people are at a disadvantage. There is one way, though, they have an advantage. That way is in being outsiders. Being born outsiders. Of course, they should be able to choose *not* to be outsiders, but they don't *have* to choose that. The *greatness* of being black is that it frees you from the *need* to be normal. It allows you the freedom to explore the outside. To look at other ways of living than the American-dream-white-picket-fence-in-the-suburbs. Black skin frees you from the mainstream, like a lake frees a trout from a narrow brook..."

"Mykel," cuts in the whitegirl, "your metaphors don't float. Please tell me how some poor black rural African-American eating dirt and wearing rags can swim down the brook to the lake of alternativeness and partake of all the alternative joys just like some little Jewish guy from Long Island who makes his living with a Masters Degree in Linguistics."

"She can't," I say, "but neither can some uneducated poor white. *Everyone* needs education. *Everyone* needs enough money to live well. *Everyone* needs enough skills to exist in society. That's clear. I'm not arguing against it. But if you've got that, why choose to be in the culture that knocked you down in the first place? Why pick up all the white culture shit that it takes years for others to get rid of? They're already free from it. Why choose to participate in work, Christianity, and pruditry, if you don't have to? Why..."

"Because you *want* to," says the whitegirl. "That's reason enough."

"No it isn't," I answer."See, I don't care about being alternative. If this were a social democracy, with equal wealth distribution, with no one working just to make money for someone else, with people free to explore their own sexuality, psychology, and physiology, with the freedom to speak, move, read, look at, and write what you want... in that kind of society I would be mainstream."

"I doubt it," she says.

I ignore that.

"I'm saying that Negroes start on the outside," I continue. "They can use that outsideness to explore other ways of living. To create other cultures, other ideas. They've been doing this since slave times. Great things have from that culture. America would be even worse than it is if it weren't for Negro culture. I'm not saying anything should be prohibited to Negroes. I am saying that they should seize their difference. They should embrace what makes them unique. They should spit in the face of the white collar white guy and say, 'Fuck you, Charlie. That's not what I want my life to be.' That's what I'm saying."

The whitegirl disagrees, as you'd expect. I won't report the whole exchange. You can imagine it.

Then, what's the point? Glad you asked.

This column is a rant. It's a plea. It's a lament. We're in danger of losing Negroes like we lost homos. The overwhelming desire to be mainstream. To be like *them,* is destroying Negroes and making more boring whitefolks. Rather, it's making African-Americans, like Italian-Americans, or Irish-Americans, or any other ethnic group in the big melting pot. Colin Powell is the model. It should be Dennis Rodman.

My God, an African-American. What a horror!

Even Jews don't go that far to be metabolized into goy culture. When was the last time you heard "Hebraic-American?" Jews know that assimilation is death for us. We know that once we start putting up "Chanukah bushes," and calling lox "smoked salmon," we might as well sew our foreskins back on.

African-Americans trade their uniqueness for crumbs at the whiteman's table.

Again, I'm not talking about equality. Equality is different from sameness. It's easy to understand the desire to be equal. To have the same rights. To live by the same rules. It's easy to understand why people get upset when the police stop them, and not the whiteguy next to them. It's easy to understand why people get angry when brown skin means, "sorry, the voting booth isn't working today." But then again...

I remember a funny cartoon by Ace Backwords. It showed this punk girl: purple hair, combat boots, torn t-shirt, safety-pinned up the wazoo. She walks down a city street. Mr. and Ms. Normal stare at her as she passes. WHAT'RE YOU LOOKING AT? She yells at them. She's been culturally profiled.

If you're different people will look at you. That's what difference is about. Why change it? Why not celebrate it? Like being a punk rocker, being a Negro gives you privileges others don't have. You can wear weird clothes. You can be loud. You can shock. You can express your sexuality in a way that whitefolks would die for.

There's a movie called *Paris is Burning,* a documentary. It's about a yearly Harlem drag queen ball. Mostly colored girls and their beaus. The movie goes through the preparation, the hopes, the feeling of loss. See it. It's really good. They made this movie in 1989. By that time, drag balls had been going 20 years in the Harlem sub-culture.

Now, white culture has Lucky Chengs and other drag restaurants for the entertainment of people who don't have the balls to wear a dress. Only thirty years late and whitey still doesn't get it.

How come Negroes did it first? Because they could. Because they were divorced enough from Starbucks culture not to care what *The Wall Street Journal* thinks. Because they were free to invent, play, create something better.

So give me a rounded bubble-butt. Give me some soil-colored hairless skin. Give me an eight-inch dick and a body more in touch with its needs than I'll ever be. Give me people who can create language, music, fashion, a way of life that doesn't rely on Alan Greenspan. Like I said, I like Negroes. What I'd hate most is to see them become white.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—>According to the State Health Facts website (www.statehealthfacts.kff.org) Hawaii had the fewest deaths per 100,000 people of any state. The number was 680, compared to the national average of 882. Next lowest was Utah, followed by California. Highest was Washington DC, with 1,083 deaths per 100,000. That's more than 1 in 100 people who die every year. In Washington DC! Considering the number of shitheads who live there, that statistic gives you hope, doesn't it?

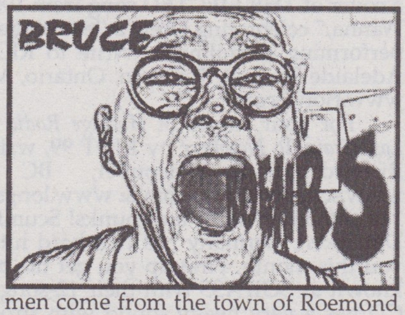
Interestingly enough, the website also gives a strange racial breakdown: Whites die every year at 860 per 100,000. "Blacks" die at 1147 per 100,000. My guess is that the difference comes from too many jobs with no insurance...and too much bacon. The strangest statistic, though, is "other." They outlive both groups... by a lot: only 547 deaths per 100,000. What I wanna know is, are Jews ""?

—>*Sometimes you can beat them dept:* Tons of internet radio stations have gone under because of licensing and royalty idiocy. As if Jennifer Lopez and Warner Brothers need *more* money. *But,* now you can do something about it. A program called PEERCAST lets you make your own internet station, and listen to others. It also shields your identity while you do it. The licensing cops won't have a clue.

To download a copy, either for broadcasting or listening, go to: find.pcworld.com/31223

—> Brian Schutz sent me word that he's got a new GG ALLIN website. The focus is GG's lyrics. There are also GG memories and other stuff. You can get to it at: www.geocities.com/kissingtheflames/mainnew.htm

Who Writes Your Rules



EVIL CONDUCT, the veteran Oi! band from Holland, has a new LP out on Knockout Records. The new product is called *Eye For An Eye* and this is brilliant Oi! music! The members of EVIL CONDUCT have been involved in the punk and skinhead scene since the late 70s and early 80s. The men come from the town of Roemond in southern Holland. EVIL CONDUCT was formed in 1985 out of the remnants of an Oi!/punk band called STRESS. This incarnation lasted until 1988. In 1998, EVIL CONDUCT reformed.

This CD just comes out swinging with "Down The Pub," an excellent lead off tune. Song number two is "No Pain No Gain," about the art of tattooing. The lead singer of EVIL CONDUCT, Han, is a professional tattoo artist and runs his own tattoo shop called King of Kings Tattoo. Tune three is "Bad Days Are Over," which is fucking poignant as hell. Read this: "Are you so blind, so ignorant/ What's wrong with you, don't understand/ Don't wanna know, what's going on/ Just look away, while you are having fun/ No, the kids are not complaining/ 'Cause they don't fucking see/ They're sucked into the misery/ Of a brand new enemy/ Bad days are over, and worse are yet to come/ Curtain is falling, for you and everyone/ You won't grow older, unaware of what you've done/ Better brace yourself/ Stand firm, stand proud/ Tomorrow you'll be gone/ It makes me sick, it makes me sad/ So many chances, I've never had/ Taken for granted, no you don't see/ You are the victims, in high-tech society."

Song number four is "Intolerance," which bemoans the senseless violence on the streets that can only be solved through unity. Song number five is "Nowhere To Go" and the lyrics on this one ring true: "Chased by the law, everyday, every night/ Got nowhere to go, got nowhere to hide/ Say that I'm evil, say that I'm bad/ Steal freedom, that never had/ Got nowhere to go to, Got nowhere to go/ Got nowhere to go to/ Got nowhere to go/ This is my country, the place I call home/ So many people, still I'm alone/ Got nothing in common, nothing to share/ A paranoid nation, kids in despair/ Feel like a prisoner, no freedom for me/ Ain't got no money, to buy liberty/ I have to live, the way that I do/ Where can I go, I ain't got a clue/ I've got nowhere/ You've got nowhere/ We've got nowhere to go."

EVIL CONDUCT proceeds to cover SHAM 69's "Borstal Breakout," and then resurrects one of their songs from the 80s, "Hey Mr. Politician." Song eight is "Jimmy," and then EVIL CONDUCT drops a major bomb on your head with the extra strong title tune, "Eye For An Eye." Great!! Read these lyrics: "When you are used to living on the streets/ Fighting and struggling, to cater for your needs/ It ain't no fiction, it ain't no fantasy/ This is the real world, ugly faced reality/ Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth/ Never had nothing, you've got nothing to lose/ You're a little older, and you have got a job/ Guvner starts to push you, will it never ever stop/ One day will come, to set the record straight/ You'll be waiting, down the factory gate."

EVIL CONDUCT finish off this fine CD with "The Voice of Oi!" "My Skinhead Girl," and "Drink." This is a fucking great LP from an amazing Oi! band. Get *Eye For An Eye* as soon as possible!

Also available on Knockout Records this month is the double LP simply called "Three" by German skinhead band LOIKAEMIE. LOIKAEMIE released their first album *Ihr Fur Uns Und Wir Fur Euch* in 1996, and their second album *Wir Sind Die Skins,* in 1999. This third album contains 13 new songs as well as 45 minutes of live material. LOIKAEMIE sing in both English and German and the lyrics inside the album are clearly printed in one of those two languages. Peruse the lyrics to "Good Night White Pride": "You pick on the weak/ You're only strong in groups/ Can't do shit on your own/ You pick on those who are few/ Right winged scum/ You have no place in our scene/ Right winged scum/ We'll teach you what skinhead really means/ You're the sickness of our generation/ You've infested almost every nation/ You're the plague of our society/ You're are our most hated enemy/ Listen what we have to say/ Good night white pride/ Only what we have to say/ Good night white pride/ Good night good night good night."

There is no fence-straddling by these skinheads! Another song with English lyrics available is "Good Old Rich Kid Bashing Day." Read on: "You call yourself free/ But that is just a lie to me/ You boast about how sweet life can be/ On top of our hierarchy/ And the only thing that's bigger/ Than you mouth is yourself/ Proclaimed magnificence/ But today we'll put an end to this/ Today, but today we'll wipe this weakness from your face/ Today, Use today is Saturday/ Good old rich kid bashing day/ And your filthy inherited wealthiness/ Is the only thing that stinks more than your arrogance/ But today we'll put an end to this/ But today we'll put an end to this/ And once you are strapped/ Of nothing you deny/ You will see what we see/ You will see you lived a lie."

The song "Corruption" also has a clear message: "with politicians, the rich get richer, while the poor get poorer." Good song! The *III* LP is quality Oi! throughout! For EVIL CONDUCT's *Eye For An Eye* and LOIKAEMIE's *III* LPs, write to Knock Out Records, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, Germany; email: mosh@knock-out.de; website: www.knock-out.de.

The STITCHES have decided to grace us with a new LP!! This one is called *Twelve Imaginary Inches* and it is quite good!! On track number one, "I Don't Know," Johnny Witmer hits you with his trademark guitar sound and Michael sings with his best snotty nasal vocals. Excellent! Track two is "Electroshock Carol," and this one has a real interesting production quality. Good song! Tune three is called "Foreign Currency" and it's not your typical STITCHES song, but the energy level is high, and it works! Song four is a song you've seen the STITCHES play live many times. "Pick Me Up" is a slower STITCHES song but you know what—it's pretty damn infectious! Song five kicks some ass! "Better Looks (When You Were Dead)" has the fast-paced STITCHES urgency that many fans have come to love over the years. Very good! The last song on side one is "Kings of Camden," and this song is too slow to stir up any excitement—flip the LP over. Side two starts off with a bang with the great "2 O'clock Shakedown"—this is fucking classic STITCHES snot! "Brains on Vacation" is up next—fucking great!!—the STITCHES still have the shit after five stints in rehab!!!

The madness continues with the crowd pleaser, "Cars of Today"—another song that always wows the kids in concert! Song ten is "Automatic" and this is a bit calmer than the previous three tunes, but Johnny gets to lay down a ferocious guitar track! Song eleven is "Heartache" and this shit is *so* punk! The STITCHES still rule the airwaves in Laguna Beach! Again, Witmer pounds on you with excellent guitar noise!! The final song is "Kids Go Wild" and it will leave you with a good taste in your mouth! The fucking STITCHES have done it again! Write to TKO Records, 3126 W. Cary St, #303, Richmond, VA 23221, USA; www.tkorecords.com OR Vinyl Dog Records, 812 S. Coast Highway, Laguna Beach, CA

92651, USA.

The saga continues as TKO releases installment #4 of "The Vault of ANTiSEEN." The *Honor Among Thieves* LP was originally released in 1988 by Bonafide Records from Red Lion, Pennsylvania. The material was recorded in 1985. This fucker has classic ANTiSEEN songs like, "I Don't Ask You For Nothing," "Jailbait," "Absent Minded," "Meat Market," "Queen City Stomp," "Lil' Sister," "Drug Thru The Mud," "Tortured Soul," "Colorado," "Hammer Head," "Wifebeater," "War Hero," "Face Full of Teeth," and "Destructo Rock." When you listen to a timeless song like "Queen City Stomp," you realize what an American treasure ANTiSEEN is. This band has been playing out for 20 years and the public is still trying to grasp the raw power that Clayton and Young deliver! Long live ANTiSEEN!!! Write to ANTiSEEN at PO Box 4905, Rock Hill, SC 29732; www.antiseen.com or at TKO Records.

Hey you punks and skins! Long Shot Records has a pair of real good punk rock CDs prepared for you this month. First up, you get KNUCKLEHEAD with their *Hostage Radio* CD. After seven years together, KNUCKLEHEAD has refined their sound to a solid Oi! machine. This Calgary, Alberta Canadian Oi! outfit has a bunch of songs to their credit and the new seven-song CD includes a video with "Flight of the Living Dead." KNUCKLEHEAD starts out with the title cut, "Hostage Radio," to get things rolling. This band has passionate singing and tight musicianship. The guitars churn forward, and the vocals cut a swath of street-punk across your brain. The lyrics of "Hostage Radio" stress the importance of the international punk and skin community. This is an excellent song! Next on the agenda you get "We're On Side," followed by "Shelters" about the frustration of working everyday and just barely getting by. Read on: "Been hard at work today like every other day/ It's not a living wage if you can't afford the rent/ We fret our lives away on bills we haven't paid/ You search all through the day/ For a place to lay your head/ We've got shelters/ For people on the street who are homeless/ But I think the system is broken/ 'Cause too many people are working/ And still can't afford the rent/ You came here on your own a future still unknown/ An end to the hard times to get back on your feet/ Here unemployment's low but all the rooms are full/ You found a job although you're still on the street/ The city points you to the shelter on 4th Avenue/ They've got 1000 beds for twice as many heads/ Your number isn't called you're back out in the cold/ To think about how cruel it is to be misled."

"Parasite" speaks of those leeches who suck the life's blood out of the scene without giving anything back. This song has a good sing-along DROPKICK MURPHYS feel to it. The fifth song is "The Cause" which contains some well thought-out ideas. Read these intelligent lyrics: "There's a mode of thinking/ You'll find within the scene/ A PC inquisition most of you have seen/ Submit yourself to judgment/ And censor what you say/ They'll scrutinize your diet/ And decide that you'll believe/ For the cause, for the cause/ Decide what you'll believe for the cause/ For the cause/ Decide what you'll believe for the cause/ Don't hand me fucking pamphlets/ You haven't even read/ Or regurgitate ideas; use your fucking head/ There's some basic punk ideals/ On which we can agree/ But I'll think for myself/ Don't force me to believe/ I follow no commandments/ Someone else set in stone/ I won't be made a fool of/ I won't be made a drone/ I'll respect your thoughts/ So please don't get me wrong/ I'm tired of all the preaching/ I thought I'd write a song for the cause."

"Fuck 'Em If They Stare" and "Plight Of The Living Dead" finish off this fine CD. Write to KNUCKLEHEAD at 1008 8th St. SE, Calgary, Alberta Canada T2G 274; email: canucks@knucklehead.ca; website: www.knucklehead.ca.

RIOT 99 are the second band featured on Mike Josephson's Longshot Records label, from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The *Last Train to Nowhere* CD features 13 strong punk rock songs that sound a little bit like early COCKNEY REJECTS. The new Longshot CD starts off with the punk-as-fuck song "Start A Riot," which was heard last year on the RIOT 99 7" EP. The *Last Train To Nowhere* CD continues with "Rise Above" and then you get the fine song "Cancer In Society," which has some pointed lyrics. Read these words: "Another school yard shooting/ And again they blame the films/ No sooner is he put away/ Than his shoes are filled/ And the lawmakers say they won't tolerate/ Such bloody expressions of hate/ No they'll guide the youth/ And implore them to think straight/ But what do they expect?/ In a culture that breeds dissent.../ There's a cancer in society/ A cancer in my head/ A cancer in society/ And like a cancer, it will spread/ From the corridors of power/ To the towers of high finance/ The dollar is the lifeblood/ That keeps the State alive/ And when the Third World crumbles/ Under the burden of capitalist debt/ The world just changes the channel/ And just quickly forgets."

Next up you get "What Are They Fighting For?," which questions the wisdom of sending 19-year-old men off to fight wars with dubious goals. "Self Destruct" is the fifth song—this tune describes the progression from a couple of drinks to a civil war. Read on: "Walking down the street the other day/ Fancy a drink, well whattya say/ A drink became 2, 2 became 3/ Before I bleedin' knew it, on me fuckin' knees/ This fella I know offers me some pills/ So I sez why not? Come on cheap thrills/ They hit me like a bomb, got me offa me face/ There we was chuckin' bottles all over the fuckin' place/ I'm sick and tired of the human race/ What a fuckin' mess, it's a disgrace/ Civil war now! Chaos across the land/ Against all authority we will make a stand/ Kill the police, blood in the streets/ Pull a tommy gun on whoever you meet/ Disorder and mayhem! Kill common sense/ Murderers set free pull down that fuckin' fence."

Next you get "On The Tracks," leading into "New York City Girl" and "Sure Thing," the latter two about the eternal male quest to get some pussy. Tune number nine is "Destroy The City," and this one punks out pretty damn hard! Up next you have "Nun Fucker" by STANLEY KNIFE—a song complete with some lyrics that are quite obscene. Song number eleven is "Dirty School Girl," a cover of THE EJECTED song from 1980. The final song is "I Just Wanna," celebrating Drew's (lead singer of RIOT 99) penchant for performing cunnilingus. Write to RIOT 99 at: PO Box 462, 31 Adelaide St. East, Torsonto, Ontario, M5C 275, Canada; website: www.riot99.com.

For your copies of *Hostage Radio* by KNUCKLEHEAD and *Last Train To Nowhere* by RIOT 99, write to Longshot Music, 726 Richard St., Vancouver, BC V6B 2A4, Canada; www.scratchrecords.com & www.longshotrecords.com.

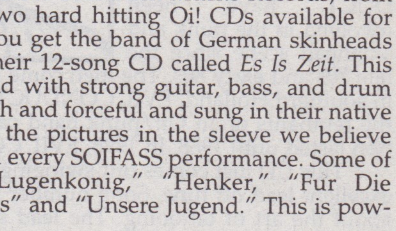
Attention skins and punks! Scumfuck Mucke Records, from Dinslaken, Germany has two hard hitting Oi! CDs available for you this month. First up you get the band of German skinheads known as SOIFASS with their 12-song CD called *Es Is Zeit*. This CD has a very heavy sound with strong guitar, bass, and drum assault. The vocals are rough and forceful and sung in their native language. From looking at the pictures in the sleeve we believe beer is involved in each and every SOIFASS performance. Some of the strong songs are "Lugenkonig," "Henker," "Fur Die Ewigkeit," "Liebe Und Hass" and "Unsere Jugend." This is powerful shit!

Next up on Scumfuck Mucke Records, you have KRAWALL BRUDER, with some metal-laced Oi! for you punks and skins. This CD is called *Die Fauste Hoch*! And it features ten Oi! songs with gruff, deep vocals, good sing-a-long choruses and metallic guitar playing. The lyrics inside the CD package are in German and the songs are sung in German. For these two brute-force skinhead releases contact Scumfuck Mucke Records, PSF 100709, 46527 Dinslaken, Germany; www.scumfucktradition.de.

Austin, Texas punk heroes the LOWER CLASS BRATS came to San Francisco and played one of the best punk shows we've had in a while! Bones and Marty and the new line-up kicked ass! The NY REL-X supported the LOWER CLASS BRATS and they were great! Both bands deserve your undivided attention when they come to your town!

Until next month,

See you at the bar!



Let me start this off by saying that I'm a bit of a nerd when it comes to punk records. While I can take record collecting somewhat seriously at times, it's the joy and consequent girly giggles and gasps I get from finding a record I really want, and the capacity to listen to so much different music, that motivates my collecting. It is something that is important to me, so I think about it a lot. It was during one of my contemplations that I started pondering the effect of eBay on record prices and notions of value. It seems to me that the prices of used and rare, and even not-so-rare records, have increased in the past couple years, more than can be accounted for by just the passing of time. There are probably a couple of reasons why, but I think a main culprit is the growing popularity of eBay as a medium for buying and selling records.

Record pricing can be kind of tricky and often arbitrary, but there are some traditional methods of determining value. The first criterion is simply whether someone wants to buy or sell the record. If the record does enter the market, more questions can be asked. For one, what condition is the record in? There is an established grading key that rates the condition of the jacket and vinyl (sealed, mint, ex, etc), but sometimes even this is largely subjective and open for interpretation, especially when dealing with DIY punk kids. Nevertheless, it serves as a good guide.

Another criterion involves scarcity: how many were pressed, from what pressing is the record, is it an import, etc.? Obviously, a record with a limited pressing of 300 is going to be worth more than a record that sold 1000 copies. Well, that is, it will be worth more supposing anybody is interested in owning it. This leads me to desirability, which is where things get more complicated. Desirability does encompass the above criteria, but there's more to it. There are some indexes of how to measure desirability, like if the record has any historical value. Some records may not be considered very good by today's standards, but if it can be considered a predecessor or root of punk rock, then it has value as an artifact. And if the record really rocks, all the more so. However, the general music listener, especially nowadays in the world of corporate, MTV "punk" (which to me is an oxymoron), probably cares little about the history of punk.

Records by bands that are really popular or hyped are also going to be desirable, and thus worth more. A great example of this is that Locust scam record, where someone did a limited edition record of a baby crying or something, disguised it as the Locust, and got big bucks for it, probably more than a 20-year-old record would yield. OK, I better stop here, because I feel a "Locust" tirade coming on. And some of the records that sell for lots of money are even still available, if someone would just go the traditional route of looking in distros or stores or by writing to the record label or god forbid, having the patience to wait for it to surface in a used bin somewhere. Also, for whatever reason (uh-oh, ego maybe?) across many spectrums, some records are just cool to have and hence desirable. Lastly, which should probably be firstly, if the record shreds, then people are going to want it.

EBay seems to operate based on the desirability and trend factor. In theory, according to basic economic principles, you'd expect this opening of the market to drive the price of records down. If you assume a constant demand, then increase the supply of the record, which is essentially what eBay does as the limitation of local and general availability disintegrates, then the price should go down. Or if because of this increase in supply, which kind of means records that once were really rare and hard to find aren't anymore, then the demand would decrease as well as the price.

Yet this is not what happens. I think the foremost reason is because many eBay consumers are uneducated and uninformed about prices and the basic value determinants outlined above. Records become more like "fetish objects" or ego-boosters. Also, eBay allows people, by letting them set their own price, to factor in things like emotional value. Just because one person spent weeks crying to one record or thinking it changed his or her life, doesn't mean it will be worth the same to another.

As a result, eBay has driven up the price of records and is setting a new standard for price based on inflated potential values. Recently I was shopping in a record store in Finland. One of the rare records I picked out had writing on the sleeve and bent and worn corners, yet was priced really high. I pointed out these things to the shop owner, who replied, "Well, I could sell this record on eBay for more than that." I cringed and thought to myself, "But that is not what it is really worth." But I had to stop myself and realize that worth, in economic terms, is defined as the willingness to pay. So, if some kid out in cyberspace is willing to pay $300 for the first Earth Crisis 7", for example, then that is what it is worth.

But I don't really want to accept that price distortion. Just because one person paid $100 for a certain record, doesn't mean (or shouldn't mean) that every copy is now worth the same. It creates a false sense of value, which is very transitory. That is one reason eBay is really hit or miss. More over, it all depends on who happens to be online at the moment. I also wonder if there is something inherent in the act of bidding, in the sense of competition, which drives people to pay more. Does eBay set the ring for a fight over records? Supposing it kind of does, it means then that the records are going to the person who values it most highly, which would be a good thing. Except I doubt this is usually the case. While eBay does open the market, it also has the potential to close it, by alienating many music fans by limiting availability to those who can spend big bucks on records.

For me, there is even more to it. EBay takes the thrill and soul out of record collecting. It is one of my biggest thrills to dig through used bins and find something great. And how about the reward of trudging through hundreds of Bananarama, Culture Club, Christmas records, and other junk, and finding the one punk gem? I love (and get very jealous of) stories of kids who find someone's early punk collection for a dollar a piece at Salvation Army. EBay will probably make those occurrences unheard of, because eBay has awakened the general population to the potential value of old punk records.

I feel like there is something unpunk and non-DIY about surfing an online catalog of which punk records are a small fraction, and competing with the click of a mouse with some nameless, faceless person, as the seller avidly watches the price go higher and higher. Especially if the seller is one of these record speculators or investors that buy large quantities of limited edition records of popular bands, wait for them to fade out of circulation, then put them on eBay for profit. What the fuck is that? Doesn't sound punk to me. And if you are lucky, or more accurately, if you have the most money to spend, then you "win" the item. I do think record collecting should be fun and maybe even like a game. And if it is a game, then eBay is for cheaters and for suckers.

Carolyn Brouillard / 2160 Tamarack Ave. / Boulder, CO 80304

Carolynchaos@hotmail.com

We Are the Punk Rock Boy Scouts

GUEST COLUMN
by Sean Jones

Here in small town NW Ohio, there isn't much to do. While growing up, there are only a select few after-school activities that you can spend time being a part of, most of which are severe and distasteful, like sports or factory farming. Another option we have is called the Boy Scouts of America, an organization that many young boys in my area join and participate in throughout grade school.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Boy Scouts of America (BSA), here's a summary of the Organization. The BSA is composed mostly of white, middle/upper class boys from rural or suburban areas in America. The BSA promotes youth leadership, nationalism, conservation, religion, and many other issues deemed moral by the guiding adults which lead the organization based out of Texas. It was started in 1910 as an off shoot of Lord Baden Powell's scouting program in England, which was founded to make young better leaders to grow up and serve their country.

Growing up in small town Ohio, I became a Boy Scout with many of my friends. As we grew up, and I discovered punk rock, I learned that a lot of my newfound politics did not gel with those of the BSA. But I stayed in scouts because of the new friends I made, the outdoor skills I learned, and the opportunity to travel. As I met more scouts, I learned that there were other kids who were into punk rock too, and going to campouts and summer camp was like a three-day show, where ten of us would sit around and play songs on acoustic guitars. Like I said before, the politics still didn't mix well, but as I got older I began to go to punk I met *tons* of punks who had been scouts as well. Most of them had dropped out though because of the conflict of interest. In fact, even Felix Havoc has revealed in a column that he was once a Boy Scout.

My only explanation for being a part of both youth "movements"—punks and scouts—to this day are my beliefs and experiences that show they can coexist. It's easily seen that not all punks are anarchists or crusties, and the same goes for scouts who are not all homophobic or nationalist. I don't agree with all of the BSA's policies, just like not all punks agree with the Black Bloc and other protest groups. I've personally seen the number of misconceptions that exist between both organizations, everything from punks believing that the scouts are only for kids from 6-10, to scouts who think that you have to burn flags to be a punk. Because of these misconceptions, I stuck with the BSA as a way to educate young scouts while working at summer camp.

Throughout the summer for the past four years, I've had an opportunity to discuss politics with kids who have never heard of them, educating them about the evils of war and racism, even while they salute the flag at breakfast and dinner. Some of them begin to change in their ways of thinking and question their upbringing, as they hear about anarchy, equality, and feminism for the first time. At first, the BSA enabled me to truly fulfill its mission, by destroying the ignorance kids possessed that could in no other way be approached. Then one day it hit me and some friends that we could use the BSA to even more of an advantage.

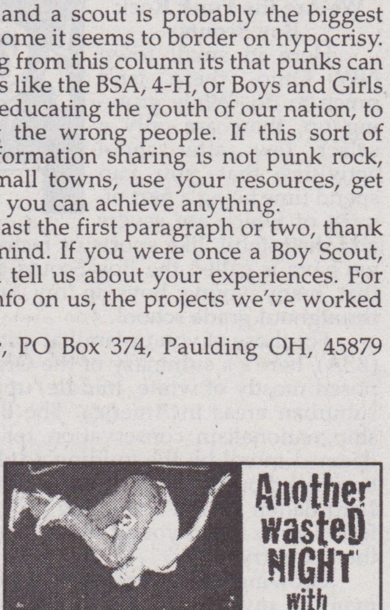
We started our own BSA troop, a co-ed one based around high adventure stuff like rock climbing, called "Venturing," and decided to use it for our punk purposes. We created a chartered unit within the BSA, registered with our local council, and we even brought in kids who were never Boy Scouts before to join the Venturing "crew."

This enables us to hold car washes under the mantra of the Boy Scouts, and then use the money we make to print a zine every season, hold shows in town, and in the future press records for local bands that can't support themselves. We use our zine to educate scouts and punks alike, trying to draw together these two radically different groups. We've been able to subvert a local organization and use its 90 years worth of tradition as an air of legitimacy for our local punk projects. Using the BSA as ally has proved to be an incredibly invaluable resource.

I firmly believe it is our contradictions that make us human beings, and being a punk and a scout is probably the biggest contradiction I possess, to some it seems to border on hypocrisy. But if you can gain anything from this column its that punks can use legitimate organizations like the BSA, 4-H, or Boys and Girls Clubs as another option in educating the youth of our nation, to keep them from idolizing the wrong people. If this sort of resource gathering and information sharing is not punk rock, then what is? Punks in small towns, use your resources, get crafty with your ideas, and you can achieve anything.

If you have read this past the first paragraph or two, thank you for keeping an open mind. If you were once a Boy Scout, please give us a shout and tell us about your experiences. For anyone who wants more info on us, the projects we've worked on, or for a zine, write us:

Crew 374, *Prometheus Zine*, PO Box 374, Paulding OH, 45879
taskmage@hotmail.com
—Sean Jones



"…spraypaint is a beautiful thing, 'cause it's shows that I'm not alone in my hatred of you…"
—Filth

I went to the huge anti-war demo here in SF last weekend. It was a pretty amazing sight, and it's a pretty amazing thing that, even before total open hostilities have commenced in Iraq (that's if you don't count the last ten years or so of bombing campaigns), there is this giant groundswell of protest. An even better sight to my eyes was the mass of around 2000 queers, punx and other assorted freaks who made up the pink and black block. And, yes even the annoying guy with the sound system blasting techno—you'd think someone could wrestle that thing away from him, or better yet some punx could bring their own sound system! Many props to them for smashing the windows of the INS building, the British embassy and covering downtown San Francisco in anti-war graffiti. They may be vain acts of destruction, but they are beautiful ones for sure.

Things are still going OK around here at *Maximum Rocknroll*, we've added a few new people around here, so let me introduce them. First up we have Mitch Cardwell, who you might recognized from his quality writing on the Blank Generation website. Mitch is going to be stepping into the void that was created when one Icki Murrmann stopped writing his column covering the latest and greatest in garage releases—he'll be setting up a PO Box soon but you can send him stuff C/O *MRR* for now. Then there's Carl Cardova—Carl likes hardcore. Carl likes the sort of cheesy sXe hardcore that makes me cringe—so we figured he'd be the right clean cut boy for the job of writing a column covering all the rumors, gossip, limited editions and demo tapes that drive that scene. Coming on next month we'll have long time reviewer Bobby Manic stepping in to dictate to all of you the joys of pop punk. So be on the out look for his column. If you feel like there is some area of the vast jungle of the punk sub-genre's that we're not covering effectively, and you want to do something about it please do get in touch!

One last thing, if you know of an independent record or book store in your area that isn't carrying *MRR*, either get in touch with us with their contact info, or have them get ahold us so we can work something out. In the post-Mordam distro'd world that we now exist in, we rely on you the punx even more than ever to help us with getting *MRR into* as many places as possible. And of course if you do a distro be sure to get in touch for cheap wholesale info!

Go see The ORPHANS fromLos Angeles.

Listen to Germany's KORRUPT, as often as you can.

As usual, write me c/o of the *MRR* PO Box or via (denote new email!) mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com

BE PREPARED FOR ACCIDENTS…
WITH ARWEN CURRY

Jesus, it's cold. Mike Thorn, reading over my shoulder, says that's plagiarism, since he whined in his column last month about the cold. But the weather is public domain, my friend. It comes to mind when you're typing, or even worse, trying to write, and your hands are like cardboard. We don't use the heat because it's cheaper that way, and the cold makes us all bristly and mean, which is good for business.

I just booked a flight to Milwaukee, where Karoline tells me on the phone that it's 20 below. I just called her to tell her I'm coming for a day, day and a half. I resisted the urge to ask, "20 below what?" Numbers like that are pretty academic to me. When I haven't lived by the Bay, I've lived by one ocean or another, where gulf streams and erratic winds keep things temperate and unpredictable.

I'm not feeling so temperate, these days. More unpredictable. The bitter cold; the "dead of winter" sounds good. I've never been to Milwaukee. The idea of reading zines by the light of a flashing neon Bud sign while Karoline tends bar feels peaceful, in the way that Christmas Eve is supposed to feel peaceful but really doesn't, especially not this year. We had a death in my family, mid-December.

Then I'll take a bus down to Chicago to meet my friend Paul.

"Fly out and drive back home with me," he suggested, on his way back from tour. "We can drive around, drink coffee, look for the punks."

I've never been to Chicago, either. Rolling into the great frozen, urban Midwest sounds suspenseful, the way New Year's Eve is supposed to be, but isn't, especially not this year. In my imagination, sexy Midwestern punk boys with old suit coats, fingerless gloves, and scarves lean bleakly against deserted pawn shops. Even though the boys stopped dressing like that in '84, it is still a nice thought.

It really does make sense, to travel halfway across the country to meet up with a friend in a bar, another friend on the road, even though people in town would be happy to walk around. Let's not take anything for granted anymore. Let's be deliberate about this. Let's make plans to meet. Let's not forget to write. I don't want to forget you, or be forgotten.

Wichita, Lawrence, Kansas City. Even though I know where it ends up, the road home sounds like New Year's Day.

• • • •

I prefer to walk, as a rule. I don't mind hills or distances. I don't get tired, not from walking. I like a cup of coffee in hand, sometimes a bottle of beer in a brown bag at night. Sometimes I listen to punk rock, sometimes CCR or something. Sometimes, just the city sounds of sirens and people passing.

Christmas Eve at my mom's house, I drank a bottle of good red wine and curled up in front of the fire to sleep. No heat there either, and I just couldn't get warm enough. I had to keep turning and waking up to throw on more wood. The wrapping paper and lights hurt my eyes. I had about as much holiday cheer as one of the logs in the pile, waiting to be burnt.

I left Christmas morning and walked for an hour or two, from the Oakland foothills to downtown Berkeley. I passed around the little man-made lake, now deserted even by the ducks. I made a detour through the underpass at the BART Station where I learned how to do curbslides and rock 'n' rolls, and leaned against the wall for a minute, breathing in the piss and exhaust. It smelled exactly the same as it did thirteen years ago, except then, I was constantly smoking.

I walked down College Avenue, past a few lit cafes and Chinese restaurants bustling with Jewish families. It was grey out, and cold enough for my gloves and scarf, and everyone on the street smiled, or at least nodded. From the bare branches of oaks, spiky seedpods dangled at right angles, and they looked like ornaments, placed there deliberately. I walked with those flashes of wholeness that make you recognize home, or long for it again.

I stopped at the Cafe Med for a refill before heading back across the bay. Upstairs, Robert was collating reams of photocopies about the Panthers and Oakland city politics over the last thirty years. We had a cup of coffee and talked about the Panthers. The art on their newsletters was fantastic. I felt like I hadn't had a conversation in thirty years, myself. Fucking Christmas. I gave Robert a piece of Chanukah gelt I got for Christmas, and he gave me a new *Zippo*.

At the Berkeley BART I ran into Janelle and Brontez. They were hanging out with a drunk redheaded girl on a cell phone. They were drinking Irish Cream, not going anywhere in particular. I brought out the gelt and their redheaded friend came over and held out her hand for a couple of coins. "I'm a Jew," she said simply, and stumbled away.

I gave them some cookies and they passed the bottle. We stood there for a while, hanging out and doing shots of Irish Cream. To think I even bothered growing up.

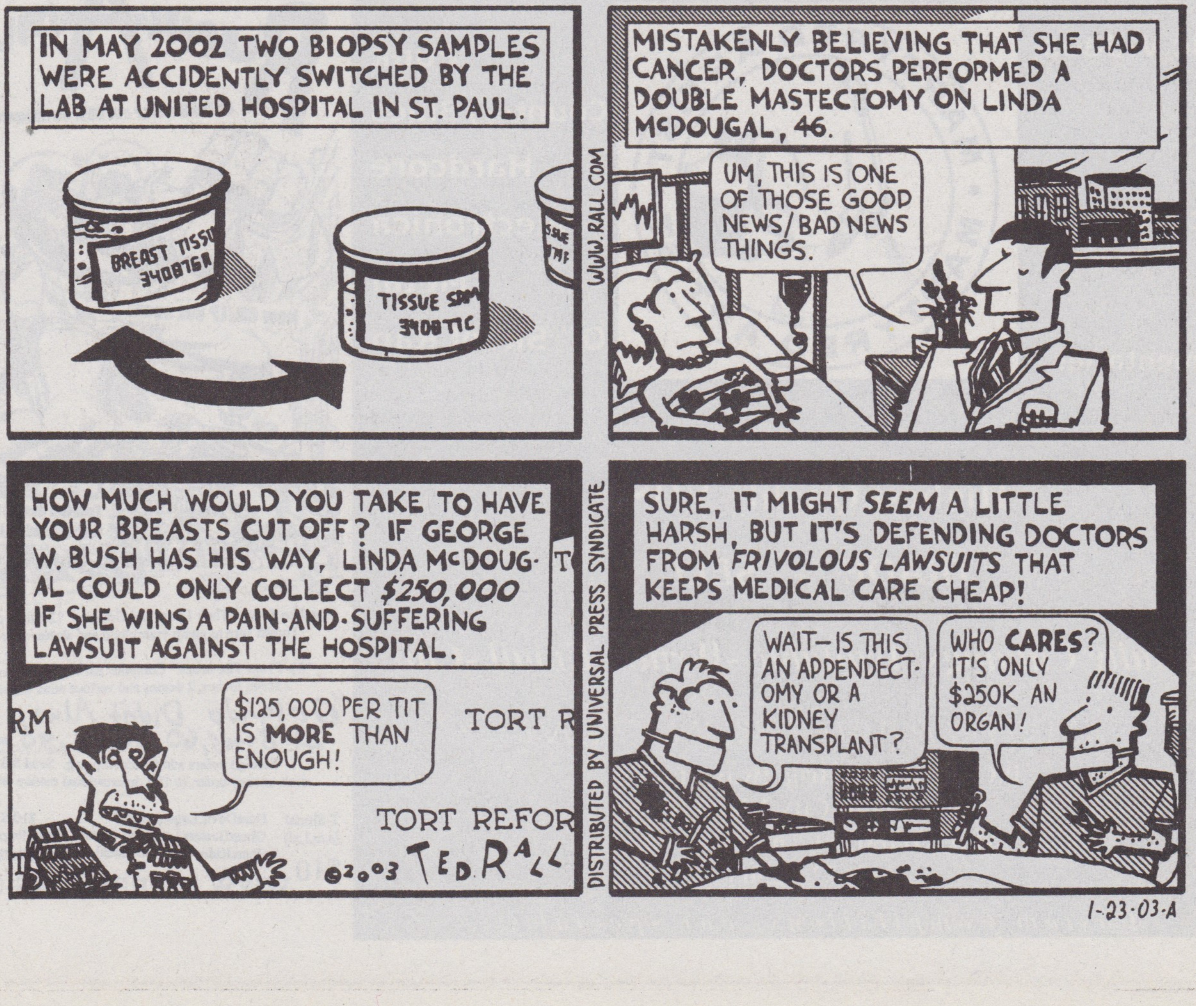
I took BART back to the City, a little warmer. When I got on the train I had a moment of disorientation. I couldn't remember; when I was under the bay, which direction was home?

• • • •

As I said, I don't mind walking, but lately I haven't, so much. I've been hiding: sleeping, reading, and writing some. When I think of which direction I'd start off walking in, all I can see is end of that line, and that defeats the purpose—to enjoy the pace, all the things you pass, and (if applicable) the company. But I can't stay still anymore, either. I'm burning inside, with quick anger, physical grief. I want to smash windows and break down doors. I want to drive away into the distance; I want to be driven home. I want to walk a little, run a little, be carried sometimes.

They call this the bargaining stage, I think. I have dreams where I'm the one who dies, instead. If I could bring her back, whole and healthy, even for a day, I would walk all the way around the world. I would leave tonight.

arwenc@maximumrocknroll.com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MRR NEWS

No. 238
March 2003
compiled by:
Arwen Curry

THIS LOOMING WAR ISN'T ABOUT CHEMICAL WARHEADS OR HUMAN RIGHTS: IT'S ABOUT OIL

Along with the concern for 'vital interests' in the Gulf, this war was concocted five years ago by oil men such as Dick Cheney

by Robert Fisk
Published by the Independent/UK

I was sitting on the floor of an old concrete house in the suburbs of Amman this week, stuffing into my mouth vast heaps of lamb and boiled rice soaked in melted butter. The elderly, bearded, robed men from Maan—the most Islamist and disobedient city in Jordan—sat around me, plunging their hands into the meat and soaked rice, urging me to eat more and more of the great pile until I felt constrained to point out that we Brits had eaten so much of the Middle East these past 100 years that we were no longer hungry. There was a muttering of prayers until an old man replied. "The Americans eat us now," he said.

Through the open door, where rain splashed on the paving stones, a sharp east wind howled in from the east, from the Jordanian and Iraqi deserts. Every man in the room believed President Bush wanted Iraqi oil. Indeed, every Arab I've met in the past six months believes that this—and this alone—explains his enthusiasm for invading Iraq. Many Israelis think the same. So do I. Once an American regime is installed in Baghdad, our oil companies will have access to 112 billion barrels of oil. With unproven reserves, we might actually end up controlling almost a quarter of the world's total reserves. And this forthcoming war isn't about oil?

The US Department of Energy announced at the beginning of this month that by 2025, US oil imports will account for perhaps 70 per cent of total US domestic demand. (It was 55 per cent two years ago.) As Michael Renner of the Worldwatch Institute put it bleakly this week, "US oil deposits are increasingly depleted, and many other non-Opec fields are beginning to run dry. The bulk of future supplies will have to come from the Gulf region." No wonder the whole Bush energy policy is based on the increasing consumption of oil. Some 70 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves are in the Middle East. And this forthcoming war isn't about oil?

Take a look at the statistics on the ratio of reserve to oil production—the number of years that reserves of oil will last at current production rates—compiled by Jeremy Rifkin in Hydrogen Economy. In the US, where more than 60 per cent of the recoverable oil has already been produced, the ratio is just 10 years, as it is in Norway. In Canada, it is 8:1. In Iran, it is 53:1, in Saudi Arabia 55:1, in the United Arab Emirates 75:1. In Kuwait, it's 116:1. But in Iraq, it's 526:1. And this forthcoming war isn't about oil?

Even if Donald Rumsfeld's hearty handshake with Saddam Hussein in 1983—just after the Great Father Figure had started using gas against his opponents—didn't show how little the present master of the Pentagon cares about human rights or crimes against humanity, along comes Joost Hilterman's analysis of what was really going on in the Pentagon back in the late 1980s.

Hilterman, who is preparing a devastating book on the US and Iraq, has dug through piles of declassified US government documents—only to discover that after Saddam gassed 6,800 Kurdish Iraqis at Halabja (that's well over twice the total of the World Trade Center dead of 11 September 2001) the Pentagon set out to defend Saddam by partially blaming Iran for the atrocity.

A newly declassified State Department document proves that the idea was dreamed up by the Pentagon—who had all along backed Saddam—and states that US diplomats received instructions to push the line of Iran's culpability, but not to discuss details. No details, of course, because the story was a lie. This, remember, followed five years after US National Security Decision Directive 114—concluded in 1983, the same year as Rumsfeld's friendly visit to Baghdad—gave formal sanction to billions of dollars in loan guarantees and other credits to Baghdad. And this forthcoming war is about human rights?

Back in 1997, in the years of the Clinton administration, Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney and a bunch of other right-wing men—most involved in the oil business—created the Project for the New American Century, a lobby group demanding "regime change" in Iraq. In a 1998 letter to President Clinton, they called for the removal of Saddam from power. In a letter to Newt Gingrich, who was then Speaker of the House, they wrote that "we should establish and maintain a strong US military presence in the region, and be prepared to use that force to protect our vital interests [sic] in the Gulf—and, if necessary, to help remove Saddam from power."

The signatories of one or both letters included Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, now Rumsfeld's Pentagon deputy, John Bolton, now under-secretary of state for arms control, and Richard Armitage, Colin Powell's under-secretary at the State Department—who called last year for America to take up its "blood debt" with the Lebanese Hizbollah. They also included Richard Perle, a former assistant secretary of defense, currently chairman of the defense science board, and Zalmay Khalilzad, the former Unocal Corporation oil industry consultant who became US special envoy to Afghanistan—where Unocal tried to cut a deal with the Taliban for a gas pipeline across Afghan territory—and who now, miracle of miracles, has been appointed a special Bush official for—you guessed it—Iraq.

The signatories also included our old friend Elliott Abrams, one of the most pro-Sharon of pro-Israeli US officials, who was convicted for his part in the Iran-Contra scandal. Abrams it was who compared Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon—held "personally responsible" by an Israeli commission for the slaughter of 1,700 Palestinian civilians in the 1982 Sabra and Chatila massacre—to (wait for it) Winston Churchill. So this forthcoming war—the whole shooting match, along with that concern for "vital interests" (i.e. oil) in the Gulf—was concocted five years ago, by men like Cheney and Khalilzad who were oil men to their manicured fingertips.

In fact, I'm getting heartily sick of hearing the Second World War being dug up yet again to justify another killing field. It's not long ago that Bush was happy to be portrayed as Churchill standing up to the appeasement of the no-war-in Iraq brigade. In fact, Bush's whole strategy with the odious and Stalinist-style Korea regime—the "excellent" talks which US diplomats insist they are having with the Dear Leader's Korea which very definitely does have weapons of mass destruction—reeks of the worst kind of Chamberlain-like appeasement. Even though Saddam and Bush deserve each other, Saddam is not Hitler. And Bush is certainly no Churchill. But now we are told that the UN inspectors have found what might be the vital evidence to go to war: 11 empty chemical warheads that just may be 20 years old.

The world went to war 88 years ago because an archduke was assassinated in Sarajevo. The world went to war 63 years ago because a Nazi dictator invaded Poland. But for 11 empty warheads? Give me oil any day. Even the old men sitting around the feast of mutton and rice would agree with that.

WORLD OPINION MOVES AGAINST BUSH

Growing worldwide opposition to a war on Iraq is putting the pressure on the US administration

by Simon Tisdall

Published by the Guardian/UK

Those who are opposed to the George Bush administration';s policy towards Iraq, and specifically its threat to launch an unprovoked invasion of the country, must surely be immensely heartened by the discernible shift in worldwide public opinion on the issue.

Last weekend's well-supported demonstrations in cities as diverse and far apart as Tokyo, Islamabad, Damascus, Moscow, Washington and San Francisco are indicative of the gathering power and reach of the anti-war movement.

For every person who took to the streets, there are thousands, maybe tens of thousands, who share their concerns. As the crisis appears to move towards some sort of denouement, the size and potency of this international resistance can be expected to grow.

It has been clear for some time that most people in the Arab world and Muslim countries worldwide would fiercely object to any US-led intervention in Iraq. Among the many reasons cited is the fear that war will increase regional instability and inflame the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The rising tide of anti-war sentiment has produced some remarkable recent poll findings in western Europe. Three out of four Germans, for example, say that they consider President Bush to be a greater danger than Iraqi president Saddam Hussein.

As is also the case in France, three out of four of those polled in Germany say that they are opposed to a war in Iraq, even if it is specifically authorized by the UN security council.

In Spain and Italy, majorities against war are over 60%, despite the expressed support for US policy of the countries' respective leaders, Jose Maria Aznar and Silvio Berlusconi. These largely Catholic countries will have listened to the Pope's recent denunciation of war as a "defeat for humanity."

The developing position in Britain is, in a sense, even more remarkable. For historical and cultural reasons, the British feel a greater affinity with the US than people elsewhere in Europe. Their instinct is to support the US, as the response to September 11 showed.

During the past six months or more, Britons have been repeatedly told by the prime minister, Tony Blair, that the threat posed by Iraq is urgent and must be dealt with, if necessary by force, as the US says.

Mr. Blair's government has published dossiers on Iraq's estimated weapons of mass destruction capability and its human rights abuses in a bid to bolster the case for war. It has also followed the Bush administration's lead in drawing a link, without any evidence, between al-Qaida terrorists and Iraq.

It argues that the worldwide problem of weapons of mass destruction proliferation, and particularly the threat of weapons falling into terrorist hands, will somehow be curbed if Iraq's regime is ousted.

Yet from beneath the weight of this official, and media-backed, scaremongering and arm-twisting, a near-majority of Britons opposed to war is emerging. Over the past three months, those against an attack on Iraq has risen by 10 points to 47%, according to a *Guardian* poll.

Other polls show that more than 80% of Britons believe clear evidence of Iraqi non-compliance with the UN inspection regime's requirements, and specific UN authority for the use of force, are essential prerequisites for military action.

Yet for all this, perhaps the biggest turnaround in opinion is taking place in the US itself. Last summer, and throughout early autumn, many Americans complained that they were opposed to President Bush's plans but that their views were not being heard by the administration, Congress or the mainstream media.

They felt that they were talking into a vacuum, said there was no debate on the issue and feared being branded "unpatriotic" if they questioned their government's strategy.

The change since then has been startling. A recent Washington Post-ABC News poll shows that American grassroots support for the Bush administration's policy on Iraq is falling steadily. Seven out of 10 Americans want the UN inspectors to be given more time to do their job, according to the findings. They therefore oppose Mr. Bush's anticipated attempt to curtail or cancel the inspections prior to launching military action.

As in Britain, this shift comes despite a daily diet of self-justifying speeches by the government, and a stream of new charges being leveled against Iraq. It is also occurring in the context of a gradual fall, as evidenced by other polls, in Mr. Bush's overall approval rating. Confidence in his handling of the domestic economy is also dwindling, and it seems likely that these trends are connected.

For those opposed to war, this is all very jolly. But the key question remains: will it actually make any difference? A few weeks ago, the answer might have been a gloomy no. But now the picture has become more confused.

Responding to the concerns expressed by its people, the French government is currently trying to delay, at least for a few weeks, the onset of hostilities. It is backed in this aim by Germany, Greece and others—not an unpowerful alliance. France is also attempting to create a united EU position against an invasion.

Following France's lead, and perhaps reading the international public mood, veto-wielding China and Russia have called for an indefinite continuation of weapons inspections.

Another issue of particular concern to the hawks in the Bush administration may be Turkey's unexpected but dogged reluctance to allow its territory to be used as a large-scale base for war. Ankara has this week called a regional summit of all the major Middle East countries to discuss a non-violent solution to the crisis.

Even Mr. Blair is showing signs of strain as he tries to take command of public opinion in Britain, but finds himself continually rebuffed. He will face stiff opposition from within his own party and government if, as seems increasingly possible, the US government asks Britain to join it in going to war without a clear UN mandate. Some commentators foresee his political demise in such circumstances.

And what of President Bush? Is there any sign that the pressure of growing public disapproval is telling on him? He certainly appears to be more than usually grumpy, and keeps saying that his patience with Iraq is running out.

But perhaps Mr. Bush is beginning to wonder whether US voters are running out of patience with him. He wants to bring down President Saddam. He wants to vanquish his other perceived "rogue state" foes, such as Kim Jong-il in North Korea. He wants to win his "war on terror" at almost any cost, continuing to play the role of war president. It has worked for him so far.

But there is one price that Mr. Bush will not pay, because there is one thing he wants more than anything else: a second term in office. He is unlikely to do anything to jeopardize that ambition, and up until now has seemed to think that starting a full-scale war in the Middle East, with all its potentially bloody consequences for Americans and others, would help him win another four years in power.

But perhaps even he is starting to worry that war, along with rising oil prices, unemployment, public and private debt and a faltering economy, could have the very opposite effect. Perhaps those around him, like campaign adviser Karl Rove, are worrying even more.

It remains unlikely that President Bush will back off now. But if he does, it would truly be a triumph for democracy in the very best sense of the word—and it would make all those street demonstrations worthwhile.

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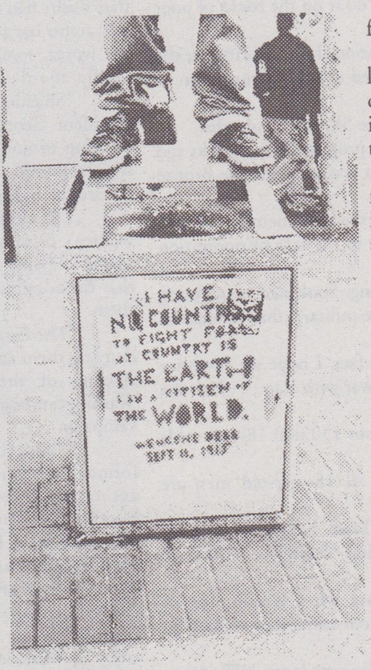
TRYING TO HALT AMERICA'S MARCH TO WAR

by Jules Witcover
Published by the Baltimore Sun

With a weekend of large, orderly anti-war demonstrations over, ignored by President Bush at Camp David, he can now resume determined plans to disarm Iraq by threat or use of military force.

Estimates of the crowds that marched here and elsewhere are, as usual, in dispute between police and the protest organizers. But there is little disagreement that they constituted the largest peace demonstrations since Vietnam and the largest ever against a war that hasn't started.



Still, they lacked much of the agony of the Vietnam protests, which were fired by tens of thousands of American deaths, not to mention young American students' fears of being drafted and killed in a war in which they did not believe.

In a sense, that fact made last weekend's turnout all the more remarkable. It appeared to be driven not by revulsion toward what was happening, as was the case in the Vietnam protests, but by concerns about what might happen if the Bush administration follows through on the pre-emptive war for which it is mobilizing.

Regardless of the precise numbers of protesters, the demonstrations did provide the most tangible evidence yet that behind Mr. Bush's popularity there exists considerable uncertainty about plunging the country into another war while the fight against terrorism continues.

More threatening to those plans is the determination of UN Security Council permanent members France and Russia and others to continue the UN inspections beyond the Jan. 27 reporting date of Hans Blix, the chief inspector, which the Bush administration hoped would trigger another war-making resolution.

If Mr. Bush ever thought he could just go through the motions of taking the Iraq dispute to the United Nations to placate the international community and then unleash the military, he is now obliged to think again.

Although the administration continues to insist that the inspectors need not find "smoking" weapons of mass destruction to warrant action, their failure so far to do so has given many UN members a strong arguing point for extending the time for inspections.

It's obvious that Saddam Hussein wants to stretch out the inspection process, but such a development is not entirely detrimental to Mr. Bush's plans, for all his talk of Iraq's imminent threat. It gives the Pentagon more time to deploy US forces, not to mention to continue almost daily softening-up bombing of targets in Iraq's no-fly zones, little mentioned by the White House.

The administration insists that the Iraqi regime is already in "material breach" of UN resolutions by failing to file a complete account of weapons it has.

But notably the White House did not seize on last week's discovery of a few empty warheads designed to deliver chemical weapons to demand immediate Security Council action. It understood the council would balk.

The prospects for a US invasion of Iraq remain real, but for the first time the outlook for averting it has grown as a result of a stiffening of attitudes at the United Nations.

Also, polls are telling Mr. Bush that support at home for war drops sharply if he proceeds without UN backing.

Suddenly it also seems that the imminent threat from Iraq is not all that imminent—unless, that is, Mr. Hussein unleashes his chemical or biological arsenal in retaliation for a US attack.

Talk also grows of pressures from Arab nations to persuade him to go into exile.

Many say Mr. Bush is so far out on a limb now with his massive mobilization that he can't stop without losing face. But much more important is preserving international solidarity. If France, as threatened, vetoes any new UN war authorization, Mr. Bush will be hard-pressed to go ahead.

Secretary of State Colin Powell, carrying Mr. Bush's mail the other day at the United Nations, warned that "if the United Nations is going to be relevant, it has to take a firm stand." There can be no better way for the United Nations to prove its relevancy than to stop the Bush runaway war-making train in its tracks.

Jules Witcover writes from The Sun's Washington bureau. His column appears Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

A COMMUNIQUE FROM ORGANIZERS OF THE JANUARY 18th SAN FRANCISCO ANTI-WAR BREAKAWAY MARCH

indymedia.org

Saturday during the nation-wide protests against war in Iraq, anti-war activists, anti-capitalists, and ordinary Americans broke away from the permitted march and marched through the streets of San Francisco. The 1000+ march snaked through the streets, leaving a colorful trail of anti-war art in its wake. Drawings ranged from multicolored chalk drawing to spray-painted stencil and graffiti art. The energy grew and march participants made bolder statements, smashing windows at a Starbucks coffee shop and at the INS building.

Organizers point out that their role was simply to move the march from place to place, so that "affinity groups" and individuals could express themselves as they saw fit. They say their march was meant to send a powerful message to both private and governmental institutions they see as implicated in the war effort. Moreover they felt it was important to make this message "publicly and collectively" to amplify voices that have been shut out by the establishment and are not being heard in society. Organizers expect that their communities will show uncompromising and increasing resistance to this unjust war.

Organizers said they had been asked to bring the march to three locations, which they did. They did not cite Starbucks as one of these locations, but smiled when they were told that its windows had been smashed.

The Chronicle, San Francisco's only major local newspaper, was the first to be covered in a graffiti mural consisting mostly of short messages such as "Lies" and "Weapon of Mass Distraction." Activists criticized the paper as a "mouthpiece of the Bush regime" and said it failed to present any dissenting analysis or critical viewpoint on the war. One participant said that the spray-painted messages she left behind are "more representative of the views of our progressive communities than Chronic Liar propaganda."

The protesters then descended on the Citicorp Center building, home to the British Consulate. "Has Britain become a colony of the United States?" asked one protester, "Tony Blair is an embarrassment to British people everywhere." Protesters also targeted Citicorp itself, citing its financial complicity in the war effort. Citicorp was also criticized for funding exploitative projects in third world countries, for its offenses against the environment, and for the way it fuels poverty and injustice throughout the world. Another protester phrased her message as a question to passersby: "Who profits from war?"

Energy remained high as the crowd redecorated the imposing INS building with images of a world without oppression. This building had recently been the target of angry protests over the mandatory "registration" of many Arab and middle-Eastern men. Marchers chanted "no borders, no nations, fuck deportations" as protesters smashed the windows of the INS and redecorated its façade. One protester said he was "outraged at the way our friends and neighbors are being humiliated and dehumanized. No person should be hauled away to a secret detention, abused, and denied access to their family or lawyer."

After the march left the INS building, plainclothes policemen who had infiltrated it tackled, brutalized, and hauled off at least two activists. The police became more and more aggressive, and organizers worried as the march began to be hemmed in. They led the protest back to Market street and headed up the street, sometimes running as police attempted to drive motorcycles into the crowd. Organizers looked for a place to disperse peacefully and called the march to an end at the Powell street BART station. Many protesters then entered the BART, only to be chased down into the station by police officers in riot gear. What happened in the BART station is still unclear.

Organizers of the march expressed gratitude to all who participated and made the event a great success. They offered a "special shout out to the pink bloc," in an apparent reference to a radical queer contingent in the march. Organizers also dismissed the preliminary media reports of violence saying, " Our march did not confront a single individual human being with violence. The only people looking for a fight today were the police."

There is no public press contact for march organizers.

STARK JOINS CALL TO RESTORE DRAFT

He admits co-sponsoring the bill is protest against a war in Iraq

by Edward Epstein

Stark, a Fremont Democrat and an Air Force veteran, said forcing all 18- to 26-year-olds to complete at least a year in the military or some kind of civilian service is an issue of basic fairness as President Bush prepares for a war with Iraq.

Stark was among 133 House members, including most of the Bay Area delegation, who unsuccessfully opposed last October's resolution authorizing Bush to use military force against Iraq.

"If we're going to have these escapades, we should not do it on the backs of poor people and minorities," Stark said.

The Defense Department vigorously denies the contention that minorities or the poor are over-represented in the military, or that they suffered a higher proportion of casualties in US wars since Vietnam.

In Vietnam, draftees accounted for about 20,000 of the 58,000 US deaths.

The idea of drafting young adults for the military was proposed three weeks ago by Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., a Korean War veteran who was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart for his service.

Since then, Rangel has gathered 11 co-sponsors in the 435-member House, showing what an uphill climb the legislation faces, especially in the face of opposition from the president and the Pentagon.

The bill provides for almost no exemptions from serving. Stark said even young people with many physical disabilities could serve, if not in the military, than as aides to teachers and nurses.

"Sure, this is a protest against the war," said Stark. "In fact, I hope we downsize the military. The president is a fanatic to get us involved in a war with Iraq . . . He's the John Wayne of oil diplomacy."

About 2 million men turn 18 each year. Currently, about 150,000 18-year- olds enlist each year in the all-volunteer military.

The last draftees were called up in 1973, although all 18-year-old men are required to register in the event another draft is ordered.

Stark, along with ultra-conservative Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, has repeatedly proposed legislation calling for abolishing the standby registration, calling it a waste of money.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld provoked criticism when, responding to questions three weeks ago about a potential draft, he made comments that seemed to disparage past draftees.

Rumsfeld said that after exemptions were given to college students, "What was left was sucked into the intake, trained for a period of months, and then went out, adding no value, no advantage, really, to the United States armed services over any sustained period of time because the churning that took place, it took an enormous amount of effort in terms of training, and then they were gone."

VETERANS ANGRY

The remarks drew angry reactions from veterans' groups and lawmakers who have served in the military.

On Tuesday, Rumsfeld issued a written apology to veterans' groups.

"Hundreds of thousands of military draftees served over the years with great distinction and valor—many being wounded and still others killed. The last thing I would want to do would be to disparage the service of those draftees," his statement said.

But the Pentagon still vigorously opposes a draft, saying the all-volunteer military is better-motivated and professional.

It also disputes Stark's contention that the military is unrepresentative of America's population.

"It is true that African Americans join at rates modestly above the national population numbers, but I would underscore the word modestly," said a senior Pentagon official at a special press briefing on the draft issue.

"Now, when we look at the whole force, African Americans represent a higher fraction of the force because they decide to stay with us at higher rates than some other population groups," he added.

In the 1991 Gulf War, the Pentagon said blacks made up 25 percent of the force deployed to the war zone and accounted for 15 percent of the casualties.

MORE WHITES DIED

Whites were 66 percent of the force and 78 percent of the casualties, while Latinos were 5 percent of the forces and 4 percent of the casualties.

But Stark, who served in the Air Force from 1955-1957, said he doesn't see military recruiting offices in rich neighborhoods around Washington or his congressional district.

"It's difficult to say a draft wouldn't be fair. I'd like to see the parent who says he's for the war, but not for my son and daughter," Stark said.

Stark's 47-year-old son Jeff Stark, an assistant Alameda County District Attorney, didn't serve in the military, the congressman said. Stark has three other children, a 7-year-old son and 18-month-old twins, from a second marriage.

Stark also has a 15-year-old grandson. "He's ripe. In two more years, he's chief cannon fodder," the congressman said.

BUSH CHARGED WITH LEADING "SECRET WAR" AGAINST REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM

by Jim Lobe

Published the OneWorld.net

On the 30th anniversary of a United States Supreme Court ruling that affirmed a woman's rights over her body, population and health groups here and abroad are mobilizing against what they say is a "secret war" by the administration of President George W. Bush against women and their reproductive rights. In an unusually strong statement issued Wednesday, the London-based International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) charged that Bush's ban three years ago on US aid to overseas groups supporting abortion rights has actually increased the number of unwanted pregnancies around the world, resulting in thousands more illegal and unsafe, and potentially deadly, abortions.

"Shielded by the smokescreen of an imminent war [against Iraq], President George Bush is waging another stealth campaign, systematically working to undermine reproductive freedom around the world," said IPPF, which released a two-page, 40-item list of administration moves since 2001 to reduce the rights of women in the US and other countries.

The IPPF statement follows similar declarations by other health and women's organizations over the past week. US groups are also preparing a major lobbying effort in late March to persuade lawmakers on Capitol Hill that the administration's policies will prove costly to politicians who support them.

"The Bush administration is waging a war on the world's women by denying them access to a basic human right—the ability to plan the size and spacing of their families," according to Population Connection, a Washington-based advocacy group which is helping to organize the lobbying campaign.

Besides the reinstatement of the aid ban, which had been repealed by former President Bill Clinton in 1993, Bush blocked a congressionally-approved US$34 million contribution to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) last July on the grounds that the agency was providing assistance to China's health ministry which has indirectly supported coercive abortions in some counties.

Shortly afterwards, Bush reversed his previous support for US ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women that requires all governments to guarantee that women will enjoy the same legal rights and access to healthcare as men.

In November, the administration announced it would withhold $3 million to the World Health Organisation's reproductive-health program because of its research into RU-486, the abortion pill.

In another controversial move, the US delegation at a UN-sponsored conference on population in Bangkok last month tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to change the language of the landmark 1994 Cairo Declaration by deleting or amending all references to "reproductive health services" and "reproductive health" which it claimed advocated abortion.

Behind these moves, as well as others at international conferences—such as promoting abstinence; attempting to block endorsement of condom use to prevent AIDS, and opposing special efforts to help girls and women who are victims of rape in war—lies a determination, according to the administration's critics, to win favor with the US anti-abortion movement, a key political constituency for the White House.

Indeed, the decision to cut contributions to UNFPA was reportedly made by the White House Domestic Policy Council rather than the administration's foreign-policy apparatus.

"The President and the Republican majority in Congress are undertaking a calculated and deliberate stealth campaign to dismantle reproductive rights for women in this country and around the world," Representative Carolyn Maloney of New York, declared this week.

"The majority of Americans who are pro-choice must wake up and join ranks before it's too late," Maloney warned, noting that the administration, which now enjoys a majority in both the House and Senate, was certain to try to push through its anti-choice agenda in the new Congress.

IPPF, the world's largest voluntary organization for reproductive health, said Bush had shown a "single-minded determination to strip women of reproductive rights and access to reproductive health services—not just abortion, but even family planning and sex education."

The group had itself lost $18 million in US aid to support family planning services in developing countries as a result of the reinstatement of the aid ban, often called the "Global Gag Rule" because it deprives overseas groups of aid simply for speaking publicly in favor of easing abortion laws.

"These acts," said IPPF's director general Steven Sinding, referring to the list of actions against women's reproductive health, "are a testament to the Bush administration's war against women and his overall contempt for their fundamental civil and human rights."

CLIMATE CHANGE SPELLS DISASTER FOR AFRICAN AGRICULTURE - UNLESS WE ADAPT

In the next 50 years, the world's population is expected to increase from six billion to nine billion. At the same time the planet they must survive on is under pressure; the number of people living in poverty is increasing, health crises like HIV/Aids are worsening, forests are being depleted, cultivable land is over-crowded. On top of such existing problems, must be laid the irrefutable fact of climate change, a factor likely to impact heavily on human survival.

For many the problems of food and water security loom largest among the planet's many seemingly intractable problems. Among them is ***Dr Mahendra Shah*** *is a leading economic analyst based at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Austria. Born and brought up in Kenya, he has worked for several international bodies, including the UN and the World Bank, in roles ranging from delivery of urgent emergency relief to longer term, in-depth economic planning.*

Last year, Shah co-authored a report entitled "Climate Change and Agricultural Vulnerability," prepared for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, in August 2002. The 160-page report reviews data for all the world's countries and predicts the impact of climate change on agriculture using various models to project forward eighty years. Akwe Amosu asked him how Africa's food production was likely to fare.

You believe that climate change will have dramatic consequences for African agriculture. What are they?

Sub-Saharan African countries are vulnerable economically, socially and environmentally as things stand. Most of their populations are in agriculture. They rely on agricultural exports; they are at the mercy of the world trade market.

Given this vulnerability, on top comes climate change. There are five major models of climate prediction. Now if you look at any of the climate change models, we find that Africa suffers in the sense of extreme temperatures well as extreme precipitation.

To take one example, climate change in 2080 will result in the arid area in Africa increasing by some 10 percent; 180 million people live in this zone at the moment, and the livelihood of the future populations in this zone will be threatened.

At the moment sub-Saharan Africa has 200 million under-nourished people. With strong and rich economies, you can cope with climate change. But even if economic growth is high, in the case of sub-Saharan Africa, progress will be slow because of the tropical resource base, an environment where climate change impacts will be substantial, and in a demographic situation where the population in this region is projected to increase substantially in the 21st century.

There is great concern, especially for countries such as Mozambique and South Africa, which will substantially lose agricultural potential due to climate change. In the case of South Africa, as much a half. On the other hand, countries such as Kenya and Uganda are winners, in the sense that they will be able to benefit from increased production potential.

So we have something like fourteen countries that gain production and fourteen countries that lose. The problem is that the fourteen countries that lose carry the mass of the population in sub-Saharan Africa. And this is very worrying.

What sort of time scale are we talking about here?

Our study analyses in annual increments from the year 2000 to 2080. I think the interesting point to look at is 2020 because of the global targets for halving poverty by 2015. In the case of sub-Saharan Africa, no matter what level of economic growth (as high as over 4% per capita annually as projected by one of the IPCC future world scenarios), even the highest economic growth you can imagine will not affect the number of the under-nourished.

Let us just take one country so that we can really get a picture of what this might mean for a population. Take Mozambique, one of the "losers" in your survey. Tell us what's going to happen to Mozambique in the next fifty years if the present trends of climate change continue.

Well first, Mozambique has a population of 18 million and in the next fifty years it will rise to twenty-eight million. Mozambique has $100 per capita GDP at the moment. It has been affected by drought and floods every alternate season and will potentially lose 25 percent of its food production on currently cultivated land.

The irony is that Mozambique has not itself contributed to climate change because it only produces 0.1 tons [of carbon dioxide emissions] a year, compared to the developing countries' average of two tons and an OECD average of 11 tons.

Mozambique is rich in land resources and if the water can be tapped it will be rich in water resources. But at the moment it's at the mercy of flood controls from the neighbouring countries and of course.

This country has the potential. It needs to work with other developing countries to find technology that is relevant to the Mozambique situation and really make a sustained effort, because you cannot run or take shortcuts.

In other words, they have to try and adapt immediately, from here on.

Absolutely. They have to adapt.

Isn't it very difficult to make these projections? I mean there are so many factors to be taken into account. How reliable is your data?

Well, first of all, this information comprises of two parts. The agro-ecological potential, which tells you the production potential in your particular country; that is based on six to seven hundred person-years of scientific work.

Secondly, we have integrated this data into a world trade economy framework -there's not been any ecological-economic integrated study at all in the world which has carried through a study on a level platform.

For example, the Unites States has done a detailed study of the U.S. using the best data. And they use the same general circulation models of climate change that we have used for all the countries for this survey. If you have a level platform, it enables you to compare who wins and who loses on a level playing ground. And that's extremely important.

So the results of this study are available for each country. What needs to happen is that each individual country needs to ask for the methodology and the database and then use their own detailed data to analyse what are the options for them

From what you've been saying, although the millennium goal is to halve poverty by 2015 with all the associated problems that poverty implies, you are saying that that's unachievable, regardless of what happens.

It's unachievable, regardless of the levels of economic growth in the next two decades. What we need are specific targeted programs, not for relief aid all the time, but to give the vulnerable people the means to build their livelihoods sustainably. So all programs need to identify in each country the vulnerable populations and the options. So it needs to be a really absolutely targeted approach to the under-nourished.

But knowing what you know about levels of growth in African economies, and knowing also about the difficulties about mobilising resources and getting coherent responses to poverty and hunger problems, what's your gut feeling about whether we could address the problems, even with that targeted approach?

I think the present situation is worrying. Climate change will make it more difficult and really it is essential that we take an in-depth look at the technology that is necessary.

For example, supplementary education needs to be pushed, because there are water-scarce areas; we need to look at the semi-arid areas, the livestock situation. Sub-Saharan Africa because of its link with the world market and the need for exports cannot do it alone. It needs partners. But at the same time we need the political commitment, the commitment to agriculture.

If you go to Nairobi, if you to Lagos or you come to Pretoria, the weakest lobby in the political arena is the agricultural lobby. They have no voice. And women farmers who represent well-over half, have no voice at all.

We need to give respect to agriculture. It reminds me on the day of India's independence, when the first Prime Minister Nehru said "everything can wait, except agriculture." We need to recognize this because if you look at the currently developed countries they've developed with agriculture as a foundation. We have little else. Let us build our economies on agriculture and give it the respect it deserves.

But from what you say, this isn't a problem that can successfully be addressed with a gradual, 'slow and steady' approach. There's not much time. When you mention technology, what does bio-technology offer Africa in this situation?

I think the first thing that needs to happen is that developing countries need to recognize the importance of climate change adaptation. This is not on the international agenda yet and it is the developing countries that must see the urgency in putting it on the agenda.

Then mitigation—the Kyoto protocol—is important. But it must be complemented by adaptation.

When you say mitigation, you mean the attempts by countries, particularly the OECD countries to bring their emissions down?

Well, all the countries of the world need to bring their emissions down. But remember the climate change of the next fifty years is already here. What we need to do is to bring emissions down so we can reduce the risk of climate change in the second half of the 21st century.

But at the same time, adaptation is not on the international agenda. If it's put on the agenda, one of the key things which will be required will be agricultural research and the question of relevant, safe biotechnology in Africa is important.

But the question is, who is going to develop it? Major international corporations do not have an interest in this, as it is technology for the poor.. And it's the governments within Africa that need to combine their efforts and see which area of biotechnology needs to be looked at in the first phase. At the same time it is not just biotechnology. We need to use the best of agricultural science, including traditional knowledge. So it's a long and sustained effort, it will take us twenty to thirty years to come up with the first new crop varieties that can adapt to climate change. If we do not wake up now, thirty years hence it will be too late.

A PDF version of the report, "Climate Change and Agricultural Vulnerability" can be viewed at http://www.iiasa.ac./Research/LUC/JB-Report.pdf

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WORLD SOCIAL FORUM: COMING TOGETHER OF A MOVEMENT

by Walden Bello
Published by the Daily Times (Pakistan)

Since Seattle, the anti-corporate globalization movement has attained critical mass globally, in the sense that its ability to mass forces at significant junctures, such as the December 1999 Seattle WTO ministerial and the July 2001 Genoa meeting of the G-8, enabled it to effect international developments and acquire a high ideological and political profile globally

The World Social Forum (WSF), to be held on January 23-28 for the third year in Porto Alegre, Brazil, has become the prime organizational expression of a surging movement against corporate-driven globalization Since the events of September 11, 2001, it has also acquired a strong anti-war dimension, and opposition to US plans to launch a war on Iraq is expected to dominate this year's proceedings.

The Porto Alegre phenomenon has had its share of critics, even among progressives. One prominent American intellectual has characterized it as a gathering mainly of people who want to "reform" globalization Another has blasted it as a forum dominated intellectually and politically by Northern political and social movements.

These criticisms have not, however, deterred the WSF from drawing widespread adherence globally. This year, some 100,000 people are expected to show up, up from 75,000 in 2002 and this year's meeting will be the culmination of an exciting year-long global process. A number of cities, including Buenos Aires and Caracas, have held Porto Alegre-style social forums. It was, however, the regional social forums that were the exciting innovation of the year. The European Social Forum (ESF), held in Florence, Italy, on November 6-9, 2002, drew over 40,000 people, more than three times the expected number. Even more amazing was the ESF-sponsored million-person march on November 9 against the planned US war on Iraq, which took place with not one of the incidents of mass violence that scare mongerers like Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci had predicted.

Equally impressive was the recently concluded Asian Social Forum (ASF) that took place in the historic city of Hyderabad, India, from January 2 to 7, which drew over 14,400 registered participants, mostly from the host country, though there was representation from 41 other countries. Topics included resistance to the World Trade Organization (WTO), Dalit (outcaste) rights, the threat of fundamentalist movements, women's empowerment, food sovereignty, big dams, the Palestinian struggle, natural resource theft, and alternative economics.

Former president of India K.R. Narayanan characterized the message of the ASF as a "voice for human rights, against violence, and against imperialism, and it is only right that it has come from India because it was India that sounded the death knell for an empire on which the sun was never supposed to set."

One of the main reasons the Porto Alegre process is gaining such momentum is precisely that is provides a venue where movements and organizations can find ways of working together despite their differences. While the usual ultra leftist groups remain defiantly outside it, the Porto Alegre process in Brazil, Europe, and India has brought to the forefront the common values and aspirations of a variety of political traditions and tendencies.

The Porto Alegre process may be the main expression of the coming together of a movement that has been wandering for a long time in the wilderness of fragmentation and competition. The pendulum, in other words, may now be swinging to the side of unity, driven by the sense that in an increasingly deadly struggle against unilateralist militarization and aggressive corporate globalization, movements have no choice but to hang together or they will hang separately.

There is another development that is equally significant. Since Seattle, the anti-corporate globalization movement has attained critical mass globally, in the sense that its ability to mass forces at significant junctures, such as the December 1999 Seattle WTO ministerial and the July 2001 Genoa meeting of theG-8, enabled it to effect international developments and acquire a high ideological and political profile globally.

Yet being a global actor did not necessarily translate into being a significant actor at the national level, where traditional elites and parties continued to be in a commanding position.

Over the last year, however, the movement has achieved critical mass at the national level in a number of countries, most of them in Latin America.

Not only has espousal of neoliberal policies been a sure fire path to electoral disaster, but political parties or movements promoting anti-globalization policies have achieved electoral power in Ecuador and Brazil, joining the Hugo Chavez government in Venezuela at the forefront of the regional anti-neoliberal struggle. Perhaps most inspiring is the case of Luis Inacio da Silva or Lula in Brazil, who won 63 per cent of the presidential vote last October. Lula is the prime figure in the Workers' Party (PT), and as everyone knows, the Workers' Party is the main pillar of the WSF.

Not surprisingly, many of those trekking to Porto Alegre this year will be coming with one question uppermost in their mind: What can the victory of Lula and the PT teach us about coming to power in our countries?

Many personalities of the international progressive movement are slated to come to Porto Alegre. By far the most interesting, most popular, most sought after will be Lula, the personification of the new Latin American left. And this year's meeting will be, in many ways, a celebration of a movement that, by achieving a remarkable measure of political unity amidst diversity, has changed the face of Brazilian politics.

Walden Bello is professor of sociology and public administration at the University of the Philippines and executive director of the Bangkok-based Focus on the Global South

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HELP GET NEW YORKERS (AND ALL AMERICANS) TO IRAQ TO STOP THE WAR!

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This pre-emptive humanitarian action has no political alliances or affiliations assigned, but all endorsements accepted.

Yes; 100,00 or more concerned citizens from America, Western Europe and elsewhere armed only with sleeping bags, signs, cameras, and our will to prevent war will travel to Iraq to stand down the invasion. Similar intentions are emerging spontaneously around the world, & we hope to help build a coherent support structure would greatly enhance these efforts and help address the challenges of the trip.

The working name is the "International Peace Force for Iraq" The name really doesn't matter. As long as the message doesn't carry political baggage or excludes any particular group. This action is an opportunity for many groups to work together for a humanitarian victory over militarism.

One part that assures success is this: thanks to modern telecommunications technology available to us the whole event will be televised live around the world.

We are talking about everyone who believes that an unarmed group in large enough numbers can stand-down a military takeover with the cameras on so the world can witness.

THREE THINGS YOU CAN DO:

An endorsement is only an acknowledgment that the plan will work and an agreement to let others know about it.

GROUP ENDORSEMENTS First we seek to obtain from as many anti-war groups as possible the acknowledgment that this plan will work. They can further assist by getting the word out, disseminating press releases, suggestions and links to a support website. All group and individual endorsements are welcome, but please refrain from including political statements. By keeping the focus on humanitarian concerns only we stay above accusations while achieving the same result.

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How will financial support be solicited and how will the fund be set up?

We now have call out for a humanitarian organization with a foundation account to receive smaller donations, and coordinate travel reimbursement and subsidies in a transparent manner.

Travel costs to Iraq from the US will be perhaps $1000 per individual, perhaps a little less-these travel costs are all we intend to raise funds for, and are not intending to create any other permanent organizational structure.

LOGISTICS and QUESTIONS

Small groups are going to Iraq now, though not yet in large enough numbers to forestall war- we hope to be part of making the effort more effective. With good communication and coordination between all groups, we will make available information on visa info, travel options and expenses, ground transportation, maps, nonviolent training, and support on the ground in Iraq. This war is not inevitable as long as individuals of conscience are willing to take a stand up for peace.

We call on all groups to spread the word and get involved in the effort.

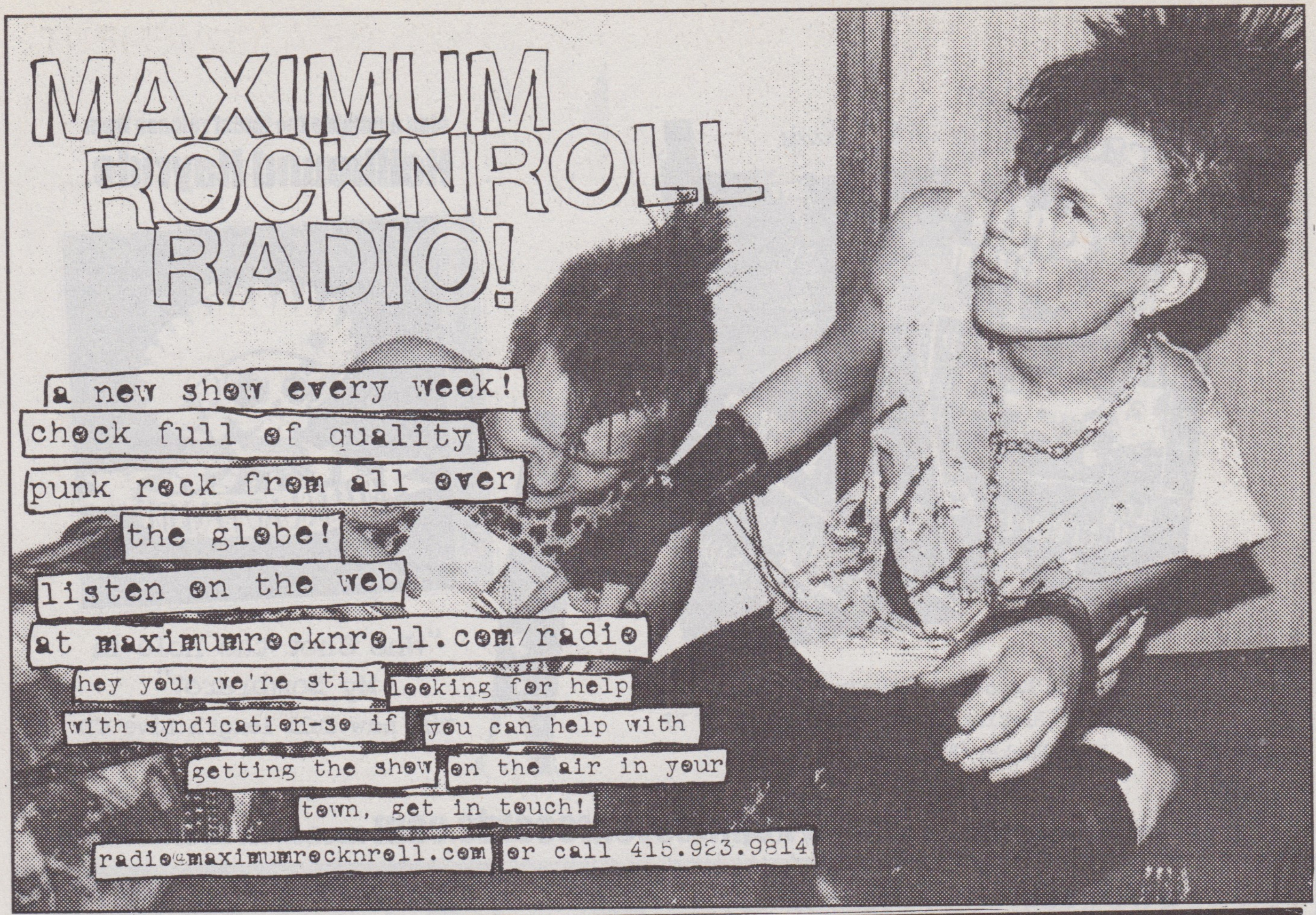
There are a lot of different efforts in the works, and people from all over the world are headed there to set up Peace Camps and other efforts in Baghdad—let's get some New Yorkers there to join them!

just a few of the other groups already on the way to Iraq:

Voices in the Wilderness
http://iraqpeaceteam.org/
Voices UK
http://www.viwuk.freeserve.co.uk/
Nonviolent Peaceforce Canada
http://www.npcanada.org
Nonviolent Peaceforce
http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org
CPT
http://www.prairienet.org/cpt/
Friends Peace Team
http://www.quaker.org/fptp/
Michigan Peace Team
http://www.michiganpeaceteam.org/schedule.html
Some European Anti war/sanctions groups that have sent delegations to Iraq
http://www.endthewar.org/members/europe.htm

It is impossible to overstate how important it is to get US CITIZENS to Iraq, and the more of us there are, the more likely it is for our European friends to join us!

A website is on the way, and a list serve. Contact: lenny at- goatwerkz@aol.com or call 212.905.2835



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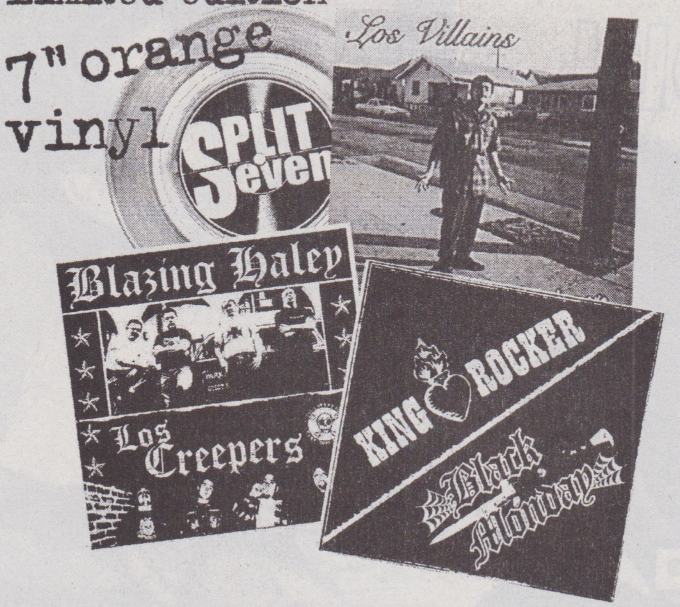
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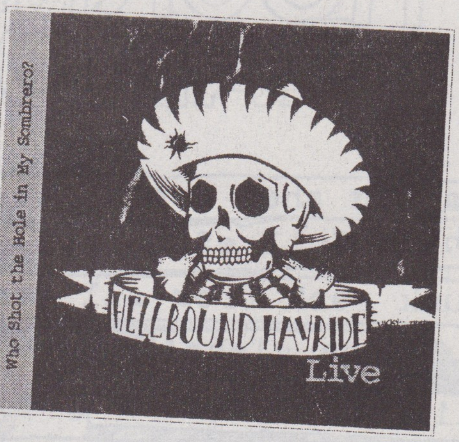
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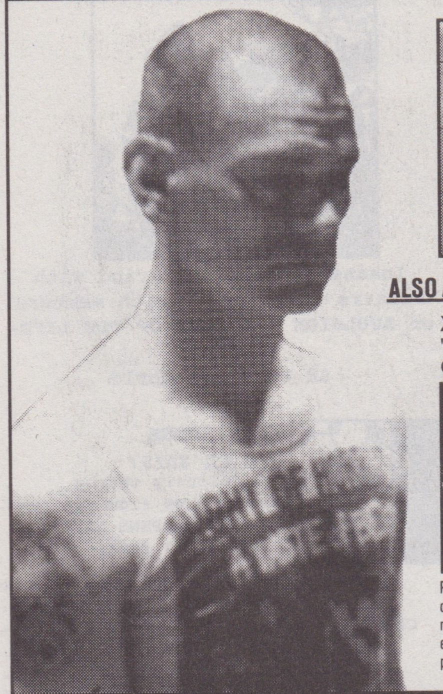

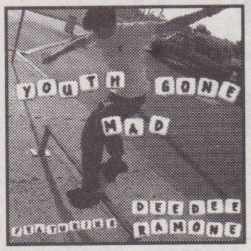

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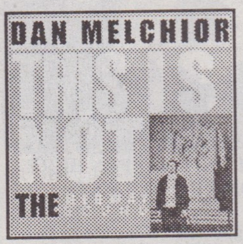

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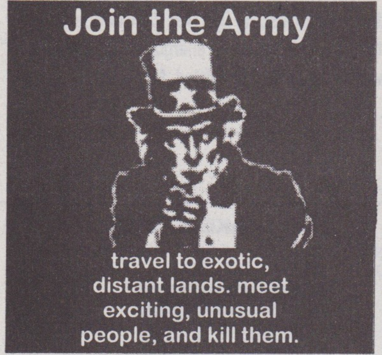
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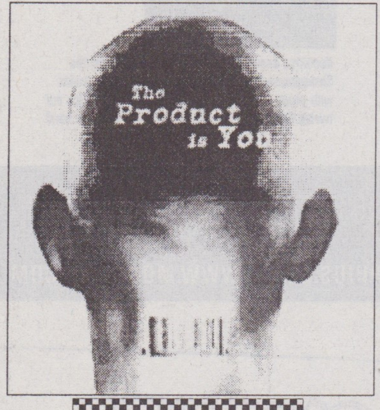

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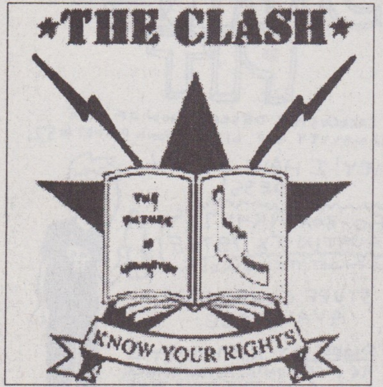

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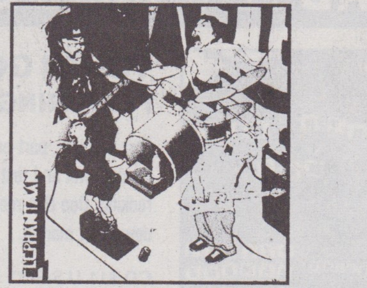

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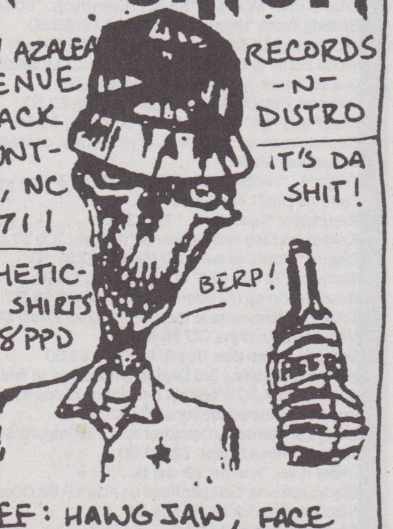

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SCENES

BIRMINGHAM SCENE REPORT

First off a short and probably not precise history of the Birmingham punk scene from someone who's been around since '76.

I think most of you punk historians will have heard of the **SUBURBAN STUDS,** who were the first punk band I was aware of from Birmingham, quickly followed by the **KILLJOYS,** and from neighbouring Wolverhampton, the **NEON HEARTS,** who played Brum pretty regularly.

The **SEX PISTOLS** played **BARBARELLAS** and **BOGARTS** in the city center in 1976, and it's amazing how so many thousands of people managed to see them in venues that held a couple of hundred or less, in **BOGARTS'** case, and were not particularly full when they played! Funny, that…

The major impact on me wasn't so much being impressed by the music (I wasn't) just the image and the punk rock girls in their fishnet stockings and panda eye make up, I cut my hair after the **BOGARTS** gig in an attempt to get close to punk girls (hey, I was a teenager and sex was more important than music).

We had regular punk gigs at **BARBARELLAS** and **REBECCAS,** where every legendary punk band played and changed my life forever.

Back to the local scene. I'm not going to give you discographies of the bands as that's sad and I can't be arsed.

Anyway, soon the local scene had its fair share of local punk bands like the **PREFECTS,** the **PINKIES** (the coolest band in '77-78) and **DA DA.** The latter two bands were the **BARBARELLAS** cool set and the **PINKIES** had two guys who were in my year at school and lived by me (hi Gary & Nigel). These two guys dyed their hair orange in 1975 and were talking about being punks which I found strange, as I thought I was into punk listening to the **STOOGES,** the **RUNAWAYS, ALICE COOPER,** and the **NEW YORK DOLLS,** and a band I loved called **THE SENSATIONAL ALEX HARVEY BAND** who were the dog's bollox at the time. Anyway, I had long black hair in the style of **JOHNNY THUNDERS** or any one of the **STOOGES** and Nigel and Gary had their hair done like **ZIGGY STARDUST,** which was cool, and over a year later I cut my hair and hit the bleach.

The better bands were about to turn up around late '78 and '79—a band from Halesowen (the Black Country) called **VERBAL ASSAULT** started playing locally and particularly in the **CROWN PUB** where the punks had taken over as our regular before going to **REBECCAS** or **BARBS. VERBAL ASSAULT** were one of the first non-poseur punk bands I ever saw, made up of kids like me (the **PINKIES** and **DA DA** were much cooler than anyone else, and liked everyone to know it.) **TV EYE** were pretty good but never really made it out of Brum, which was a shame, as they looked the part and had some really good songs.

The **PREFECTS & AU PAIRS** were more student types and a bit older than us, the **AU PAIRS** were just shit, but that's just my opinion—definitely not street punk though.

By the end of 1979, the Crown Punks had become firmly established as the only punks who mattered in Birmingham, the Crown had become punk and skin central, and the real punk bands emerged in a blaze of anger and energy.

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE, the **DUNG BEETLES, CHARGED GBH,** the **DEAD WRETCHED, SUSPECT YOUTH, GENERATOR, CADAVEROUS CLAN, LAUGHING TORSO, CID, FRANKENSTEIN'S OWN, CERT X, WORMS UNDERGROUND,** were all bands whose members hung out in the Crown.

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE were the band with the first large travelling following, playing gigs with the **DEAD KENNEDYS, CRASS, POISON GIRLS,** the **STRAPS,** quickly followed by the soon-to-be world champions of punk, **GBH** and the **DEAD WRETCHED, CRIMINAL CLASS** from Coventry, and the **VARUKERS** from Nottingham. **DISCHARGE,** from Stoke, made the midlands a hotbed for real punk rock.

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE and **GBH** were playing gigs together back in 1980 (they both played my wedding), and they still occasionally play together today and drink in the same Brum HQ, The Market Tavern.

The mid-80s were pretty dire for the whole of the UK—we had a few exceptions like the **PUNGENT SMELLS,** the **TENANTS, VALLEY OF THE DOLLS, JOHNNY GUITAR, 48 CRASH** (a trashy glam punk band who's guitarist Anton is now the current Drongo guitarist), a goth rock type band called **DAWN AFTER DARK** who were pretty good, and **GUNFIRE DANCE,** who carried the punk n' roll torch. There was a good band called the **LOST BOYS,** and a band I played in called **SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5** who started off great, but just keep the ball rolling.

DFE split up in the mid-80s, reformed in the late 80s, and carried on into the 90s, never actually splitting up, but doing nothing until 1999 when we resurfaced again supporting **GBH** and the **UK SUBS** in Birmingham.

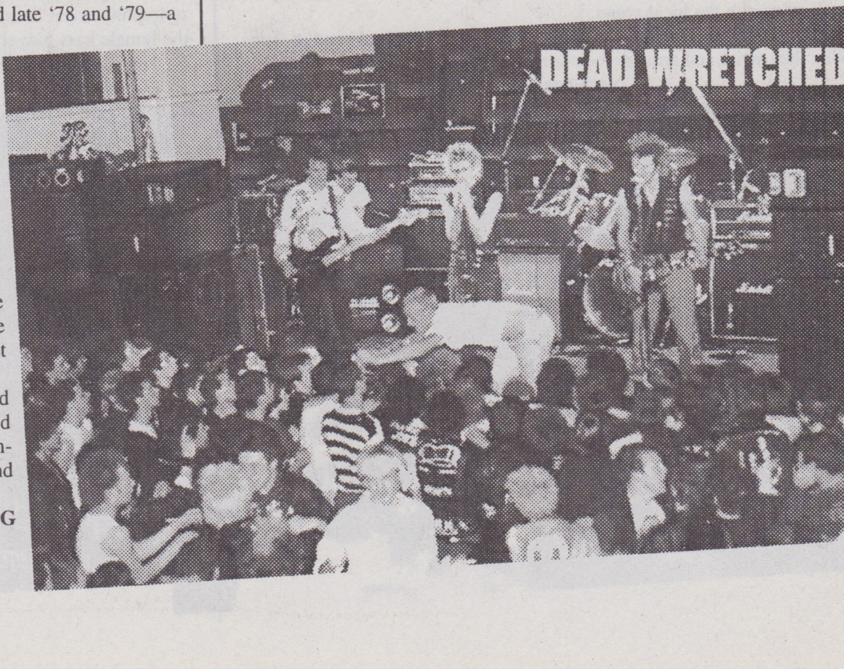
THE CURRENT BRUM PUNK SCENE

Which brings us to the current Birmingham/West Midland punk scene, which is a thriving hotbed of the very best in UK punk and oi.

One of the bands who kept the scene going in the mid-90s and is still going strong today is **ROTUNDA,** who plays UK street punk with a hint of Pennywise, melodic power chords, and some Suicidal Tendencies-style guitar frills that don't clutter the very catchy street anthems. Watch out for a new album from the band soon.

DOGSHIT SANDWICH also picked up the torch and set the stage on fire—I think they've been around for as least as long, if not longer, than Rotunda. **RICH LARD** from the band runs **PUNKSHIT RECORDS** and distro and has regularly promoted gigs and punx picnics for some time now—this is a man who deserve big respect and thanks from Brum Punx for his often-overlooked efforts to keep our scene alive—thanx Rich.

CONTEMPT from the nearby Black Country plays (and plays really well) political oi/street punk (a Brum speciality) with some awesome drumming from Ivor and really powerful vocals from the powerful-looking Griff. This band gets enormous respect throughout the UK and deservedly so—they are truly awesome, with great songs.



SENSA YUMA is a Brum-based band with **STU–PID,** ex of the **ENGLISH DOGS,** on vocals. **STU** recently relocated to Spain, but can be found back home in Brum around Christmastime ready to rip it up on stage with the band and Brum punk buddies.

Band members have included **JOCK** amd **ROSS** from **GBH, MICKY COIL,** the bass player from local punk legends **THE DEAD WRETCHED,** and **SAM,** from **DOGSHIT SANDWICH** and **CUPID STUNT**.

The **FUHRERS** feature **OSSIE,** who has played drums for **THE BRIAN JAMES GANG, LORDS OF THE NEW CHURCH,** and my personal favorites, the **STEPPIN RAZORS.** The guitar player **DAVE** used to play guitar for **SISTER AUTOMATIC,** a really good band who set the local scene alight in the mid to late 90s and early 2000 before folding. **MICKY COIL,** the vocalist/bass player, has recently been playing for **BENEDICTION,** and drummer **MATT** is rehearsing with a new band and should be gigging anytime now.

The **FUHRERS** play the sleazy punk n' roll you'd expect from a band containing **OSSIE**—they're part of what's known locally as the Moseley Scene, Moseley being the bohemian area of Birmingham. This bunch run occasional "Stay Sick" nights where you almost certainly won't be hearing any street punk or hardcore, but if you like your punk sleazy (dare I say garage?) then look out for the **FUHRERS** or **STAY SICK** nights.

CUPID STUNT are a ramshackle, almost (in my opinion) '76-style punk rock band who bring to mind '76-era **SLITS** (before they went dub) The band features three women on guitar, drums, and vocals, with a male bass player, though he is prone to wearing a dress when playing live.

SHUV IT also features female bass and guitar players, who share vocal duties with an excellent drummer. This trio played the last Holidays In The Sun in Blackpool and has, after an age in the rehearsal studio, started to gain much respect in the local scene.

APENDIX ONE are probably the most original local band in terms of the way they write and arrange their songs. I don't really want to talk about each band, then say "they sound like...fill in the blank," but it's hard to write about something you have to see and hear and feel, so in my opinion when I see this band, I'm thinking Killing Joke, Prong, someone else mentioned Fugazi, who I don't really know much about.

Anyway, they're very good and don't play half as much as they should, but it's very difficult for this band to fit in any category, much like another "almost" local band, **FLYBOY,** who will have played their last gig on December 28, 2002, supporting **DFE** and **GBH** at the Market Tavern.

Like **APENDIX ONE, FLYBOY** play a mixture of punk, hardcore, and at times off-the-wall weird shit that defies pigeonholing—they don't have a strong image, preferring to concentrate on the music, much respected but scandalously overlooked.

LAST UNDER THE SUN can also be filed under "defies description." I think some members of this band used to play in another extremely good but strange punk band called **HOT TORTOISE,** who I liked but who didn't seem to fit in anywhere—shame. Mark Badger from the band also promotes gigs at the **RAILWAY** in Birmingham on Tuesday and Wednesday nights—a great venue, great sound and PA, good size stage, but not always as well-attended as it should be—c'mon kids, make the effort.

CRACKED ACTORS aren't strictly a punk band, but are definitely part of the punk scene, playing the kind of ska/punk (or skunk rock, as they would have it) that Spunge could only dream of playing. This multi-racial band also dips into dub and punk without missing a beat—better than Pain any day—just my opinion, remember!

Worth checking out for the front men alone, **FUDGE** has been around since punk year dot singing for **GENERATOR,** among others. You won't stop dancing, I promise.

DUBROKKAZ are what the name suggests. Featuring ex-Drongo Steve Devlin on guitar, this dope-fuelled band can chill you out with a heavy heavy dub sound or step it up with a punk vibe. Another Birmingham multi-racial melting pot of sounds, pretty unique to this town.

The **CRAP SHAGS** are a great young band with a charismatic female vocalist who can really sing a punk song. They reminded me of the **AVENGERS,** definitely more a '77 style band than UK '82—that's why you'll not hear a Vice Squad comparison from me. They're really good, and they also look good, which may not sound too punk, but for someone bought up on **NEW YORK DOLLS, PISTOLS, GEN X,** etc., I think it's cool to be day-glo, and the clincher for me is that they do a cover of "Cream in my Jeans" by **WAYNE COUNTY** (proper punk rock, you crusty fools!)

3 & HALF INCH FLOPPY has a great front man who jumps around and gives his all during a live show. The band plays a good live show and their songs ain't half bad either—one of them has a spikey mohawk which endears me to young bands for no other reason than it's still the best hairstyle ever invented.

I think one of them used to play in a band who seem to have vanished off the face of earth called **LASHED UP,** who had a girl singer with screeching, cat-wailing vocals. Unusually for younger bands, they played '77 style punk, even doing "Too Drunk to Fuck" as a cover. (OK, I used to fancy the female bass player!)

HARDCORE actually plays downright catchy singalong street punk with good backing vocals, good musicianship, and good choice

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE

of covers (**STOOGES** "Search & Destroy", you can't lose)—another good band, catch 'em.

The **BUGGERS** would have got a better write-up had they not changed their name in order to get more media exposure (can't have a punk band upsetting anyone can we?) Can't remember their new name and don't caremissed the point, boys, which is a shame, because when I saw them live I thought they were really good. But c'mon.. they did get single of the week in *Kerrang* though, so what does my opinion matter?

EASTFIELD have been around for quite a while—they're one of the best live bands I've seen this year; better as a three-piece I have to say. You all probably know what they sound like, but if you don't, think the **BUZZCOCKS** crossed with the **TOY DOLLS** with a crusty veneer, and singer Jessie sports a very suspect haircut (speaks the bald man!)

PIGFISH are a band who've been in or around the edges of the local scene for a few years now. Though not really part of the street punk gang, they are a well-respected band who play Ramones-inspired punk n' roll, see 'em live.

The **MEANWELLS** are a new band on the scene, though Andy Hardcore is a scene veteran who's played in more than a few local punk bands, **DOGSHIT SANDWICH** included. I've only seen them once, their second gig, I think. They play a kind of **EASTFIELD**-style punk, but it's hard to say as it's early days for the band. The more the merrier.

JIF NOT CIF I've seen only once, but they were really good, powerful melodic punk rock with good vocals, and they had fun on stage—hey kids, remember it's showbiz, give the punks a show. We ain't emo here in Birmingham.

The **COFFIN BANGERS** I haven't seen yet, but local punk face **BLONDIE** drums for them, so that should be recommendation enough for anyone. **BLONDIE**'s drummed for **SENSA YUMA,** among others. I suspect it may be punk rock sir!

We have a thriving skate punk scene here in Birmingham. Most of the local bands will play at **SCRUFFY MURPHY'S, THE FLAPPER & FIRKIN,** or **EDWARDS NO 8**. Rob Frost, a local promoter, "Wag Dog" puts most of these gigs on, though the **FLAPPER** sorts its own gigs out and is a hot bed for these baggy-trousered punks.

The best bands, in my opinion, are **PIGNUT, FARCE, & TEN MEN JEN.** I've not been to see any of these bands in the last six months. Alldayers is the best way to find out about these bands, and local record shops **TEMPEST, SWORDFISH, PLASTIC FACTORY** or the **OASIS MARKET** is the place to pick up flyers or see posters.

We now have Becca living in **BIRMINGHAM**. She writes the excellent *Puke* zine, availiable from 126 Pineapple Road, Stirchley, Birmingham B30 2TX. She's got her finger on the pulse so check out her zine for about a quid.

Check out the drongo website on www.mysite.freeserve.com/drongosforeurope/

Apologies to any bands I've missed. If you see me about remind me and I'll forward the info to where ever this is going, be it on the web or in zine form.

Birmingham is punk central in the UK. Come and check our city out, play our venues, support our bands. Birmingham is second to none!!

—Dek Drongo

Let me introduce myself … I'm Hardi of *Rebelliousickness* zine from a Third World country, Indonesia. I just wanna tell you a little bit about my scene. Indonesia had a big scene from one city to other city. But I can't write about it all, maybe only some bands that I recommend (but not all). I'm more interested in bands with political stuff. I don't care about bands who only talk about racist, fascist, nationalist, drunk, satanist stuff...but I'm not straight edge (sXe) although I don't use drugs, no free sex, just drink mineral water (except milk) hahaha… and stopped smoking. Sometimes I also hate sXe-ers that feel better and more…shit! (I think you must not only live a positive life but your inner self must positive.) So, I hope you all are not irritable about my opinion. I hope this scene can make communication…Communication is strength! As usual, many bands grow up and many bands are gone!

Firstly, I will write about a band from my city, Bekasi, the **UNITED SMOKERS** (US). This anarcho punk band is very famous in here (also in INA). Their lyrics are very political and provocative enough. Also, they did real action in the Bambu Runcing Collective. More than 58 factories/industries have been boycotted. *Making punk a threat again!*. **US** have released two tapes: *Jangan Dilarang Bangsat* (demo) and *Menang Atau Mati* (album, 2001). Usually, the bands in INA release their stuff in the cassette format because CDs are very expensive. Many people have said their music is in Exploited vein, and I also have the same opinion. I don't know about their plans for the future… You can contact them via me, because my home is close to the drummer's home, hehehe…

Let's look at the other big scene (Jakarta and Bandung). From Jakarta City: **MARJINAL** (anarcho punk) is one critical band that I've found. Previously, the band was known as **ANTI MILITARY.** They released two tapes (their first s/t demo and their first s/t album). After that, their change name to **MARJINAL** and have one album, *Termarjinalkan.* Their music seems like balada/mars touched punk rock. At the gigs they always do an oration. (I know this band very well.) They are preparing new materials for new album and an acoustic album. **DISLIKE** (anarcho brutal punk) is very close with **MARJINAL** 'cause they all live in one room, hahaha. They brought together AFRA (Anti-Fascist Racist Action) Collective, also **BERONTAK RECORDS**. **DISLIKE** only had a split with **DISTRUST** (S'pore). If you wanna know more about both bands, you can contact me. I often hang out at their gallery, **TEMPEQUALITY.**

RSG, a fast core/crust punk band, is very productive. Their debut tape is called *Innocent People are…*. In a year they will have three splits, if they all come out. After a split with **SUCK DESTROY**, they'll continue with a three-way split with **AGGRESSOR** and **SOCIAL DISTRUST**. Next, a split with **ANJINGTANAH**…goddamn! All the splits will be released by the vocalist's label, **MENCRET RECORDS**. All **MENCRET RECORDS** stuff is anti-copyright.

RSG's vocalist is also the bassist of **ALLNATIONDEATH/AND** (great crust). This is also **DISLIKE**'s vocalist. They have released two tapes, *Third World Resurrection* (demo) and *Neo Imperialism* (album-interesting stuff). The new stuff is split with **HUMAN WASTE** (Sweden), but I don't know when it will be released.

CRASHED OUT/CO (punk rock) is productive too! First EP: *Global Resistance For Global Existence.* New EP: *I Salute You*, next tape is split with **BUG CENTRAL** (England) and a three-way split with **MELEE** (USA) and **VALS** (?) **CRYPTICAL DEATH** (grindpunk) is a young band, but they have a great attitude. Their first album, *Fight, Survive, Existence,* is fucking great! Really, really interesting stuff, recommended! Growling vocal, grinding drums, punk beats…check it out! They did a split with **BURNING INSIDE**. I don't like **CRYPTICAL DEATH**'s music anymore (what's the matter?)

Now, see Bandung City. I can't deny this city has many, many great and interesting bands. There are new bands such as **DOMESTIK DOKTRIN** (still true to the DIY way). **DOMESTIK DOKTRIN** plays old school sXe (but faster). They have good political lyrics with sarcastic jokes. The EP, *Manufakturing Karma,* is out now! Also, **DOMESTIK DOKTRIN** is the first INA band released by 625 Thrash Prodcutions (USA). The bassist/vocalist of **DOMESTIK DOKTRIN** had a record, *Kontra Produktif*, and repressed VITAMIN X's discography. Satanik thrash band attack!!! **ANJINGTANAH** is a crazy band in the vein of **CHARLES BRONSON**. Many people are shocked by their dirty, vulgar lyrics…straight to the point! **ANJINGTANAH** have a split with **FULL ERROR** and a demo, *Diminuendocorruption.* They are preparing their shit for discography in January 2003. Satan bless him! **BALCONY**, I don't know about their music. Their music changes with every release; *Instant Justice* (album '97): oldschool, *Terkarbonasi* (album 2000): strange HC, *ReDefinishit* (EP 2001): remix version. And the last time I saw them at a gig, they played metal core.

Some people joined in **HARDER** (Records and Collective). Also **BALCONY** stuff was released by this label. **BURGERKILL**, the greatest HC band, now seems to be mainstream, shit! One of the pioneer sXe from Bandung, **BLIND TO SEE** sounded like Youth of Today. After their first album, *Sadar,* I never heard any news from the band. **BLACK BOOTS** (RIP, anarcho-raw punk). Some people still exist in the **TARING PADI** Collective. **TP** is a culture/art community. **TP** is active in the democracy process in Indonesia. Then there is the association of Indonesian anarchists, **BUNGA** Collective. Visit their website! **KONTA KULTURA** Kollective releases resistance writing and translations. This collective is productive, contact them! From Malang City, there is the **LIBERTARIAN** Collective and Distro. **SAYAP IMAJI** is a (dis)collective, but he has many zines and newsletters. The man behind it is Bowo (the vocalist of **PROLETAR**, crustgrind). Oops, I talked more about collectives! Do you like it? OK, dude, back to the bands…

Sometime when a band is bigger their idealism is more gone (maybe sold out!) But if you just like the music, I can't write about all the quality bands. The **IDIOTS** (anarcho brutal punk) still exist but never released new stuff after *Living In Comfort* (demo). But some news: they're preparing new materials. The vocalist is also making a zine, ***Let Your Idea***. And the bassist made his own record, *Peeper*.

THINGKING STRAIGHT (old school Swedish influences) is one pioneer sXe band from the Depok City Straight Edge (DCS8) crew. They only have an EP out, *Positive Crew*, on the bassist's label, **CHANNEL X RECORDS** (that only releases sXe bands. Why?). The drummer also made another project band, **TASTE OF FLESH** (he is a singer in this band) and has his own records and newsletter (same name) called ***Our Step Today.*** **TOF** have released an EP *Tyrany* and a (new) split with **SEHAT DAN KUAT**. Also, their next tape is a four-way split. **EXTREME HATE** (grindcore); why am I writing about this band? 'Cause the vocalist (Cece) is the false editor of ***Rebelliousickness*** zine, hahaha. He founded a distro, **PERJUANGAN**, and new record label called **TUKANG SAYUR** that released **SHOP** (grind noise) and **TERSANJUNG13** (crust grind), and is waiting for six-way split (**EXTREME HATE / TERSANJUNG13 / SOCIAL DISTRUST / TOTAL DAMAGE / DICKHEAD / HUMAN CORRUPT**).

The fuckin' great crust from Malang city is **ANTIPHATY**. Too bad that since the vocalist left, this band has a vacuum. The greatest grind band from Malang is **EXTREME DECAY** (very known in death metal scene and punk/HC scene). They are very productive. **LAST EXDX**'s album is *Sampah Dunia Ketiga.* **STEP FORWARD** (new school), with a girl vocalist, has an album *Stories of Undying Hope*. Some person from **ATRET** (crustpunk-RIP) made a new band, **MORTAL COMBAT,** and founded **COMBERAN** Distro. **LOST SIGHT** played old school but don't wanna be called hardcore, hypocrites! **INNER STRUGGLE** is all girls playing hard HC. **STRAIGHT ANSWER** (old-HC/punk) released their last EP in October. **KEPARAT** is famous punk, **JERUJI** (punk, but more metal, and covers a song from Metallica…whatthafuck?), **SEPTICTANK** (street punks who have a split with The VIRUS, USA), **THE SINNERS** (punk), **SUPERMAN IS DEAD** (melodic from Bali), and there are many fuckin' more…

About fanzines? Of course I will write about my zine first, hehehe… Hell yeah, ***Rebelliousickness*** is one of the best zine from INA, hahaha…kidding! (see profile). Pam. No, it's not a zine name, but a scenester name. He has released many political and provocative zines/writings such as ***Gandhi Telah Mati*** (great), ***Mempersenjatai Imajinasi***, etc., many people like it and hate it. ***Membakar Batas*** (hip-hop political zine), many people recommended this one. The editor is vocalist of **HOMICIDE** (political hip-hop). ***Tigabelas*** (HC/punk)—the last edition is a double issue (#4 & #5). The editor is the vocalist of the legendary un-HC band **PUPPEN** (RIP). His own record label, **PARAU,** released Los Crudos, Spazz (repressed), **DOMESTIK DOKTRIN** (new first EP). Hey, this guy is a presenter some of MTV Radio (and work for MTV). So, is he hardcore? Hahaha…. ***Konspirasi Busuk*** (punk)—the editor is guitarist of **ALLNATIONDEATH**. He also managed **SOUND OF ANGER** Records. Another zine: ***Urban*** (political punk/HC), ***P.H.O.D.*** (same), ***Sub Chaos*** (same), ***Setaramata*** (feminist, gay, lesbian), ***One Life Stand*** (HC), ***Fallen Angel***, ***Senyum*** , ***Senyum Palsu, Dirty Bastard***, etc., etc… Sorry pals, I can't write everything besides the zines predominately written in Indonesian. Do you understand?

Record labels? **BERONTAK** Records, you can find by the guy from **DISLIKE** or **MARJINAL**. Hey, all **BERONTAK** releases are anti-copyright…. **CONFLICT** Records. I think you just go to their website and download some songs (MP3) from band they released, such as **DISREJECT** (crust grind), **FOUTY'S ACIDENT** (HC), **FREECELL**, **OSA**, and many others. Ask about their activities! **MOVEMENT** Records—many people say this is great punk label, but I have no comment… **MY OWN DECK** Records (only melodic bands). **REALINO** Records, this is a skinhead label, but no racist/fascists in here…fuck off! Ask them about the Indonesian skinhead scene report.

OK guys and gals, so much I can't write it all. Once again, thanx to those who want to read this. For all of you who feel unsatisfied and need more info, just ask me, I'll do the best I can. I hope with this scene report we can make communication…(below I'll write some addresses). That is just a little report for you. A thousand sorries if you feel confused by my English, I'm not good in this language…stupid boy!

Interested in contact, info, trade, other…you can write me at:
REBELLIOUSICKNESS zine, c/o Hardi Bangsat, Komplek DEPERLA, Jl.P.Sambu No.4, Bekasi - 17111, Jawa Barat, Indonesia
My emails (choose one):
rebelliousickness@hotmail.com
hardibangsatsekali@yahoo.com
ibuku_diperkosa@hotmail.com

Addresses contact:

EXTREME HATE/ PERJUANGAN Distro / **TUKANG SAYUR** Rekord: c/o Cece, Mess PT. IWWI Jl. Yos Sudarso No.7, Batu Ceper Tangerang 15122, Indonesia
editor_palsu@hotmail.com
MARJINAL/ COMBRO comic/ **DISLIKE / BERONTAK** Recs / **AFRA** collective: PO Box 7735 JKSLA, Jakarta 12077, Indonesia
tempequality@doityourself.com
combro@doityourself.com
RSG / ALLNATIONDEATH / MENCRET Recs: c/o Inal, Jl. Tebet Barat Dalam VIII No.28 Jakarta Selatan 12810, Indonesia
inal13@yahoo.com
ALLNATIONDEATH / KONSPIRASI BUSUK zine / **SOUND OF ANGER** Recs: c/o Rizal, Jln. Kebun Jeruk Raya No.76 Suite #13, Jakarta Barat 11480, Indonesia
SAYAP IMAJI / PROLETAR: c/o Bowo, Jl. Karet Belakang III #8, Setiabudi, Jakarta Selatan 12920, Indonesia
sayap_imaji@yahoo.com
URBAN zine: c/o E'en,
pacultani@hotmail.com
PHOD zine / **TERIAK** recs: c/o Ari, Jl. Pitara Rt.05/14 No.49, Depok 16436, Indonesia
terbujurkaku@hotmail.com
TIGABELAS zine / **PARAU** Recs: c/o Arian13, Jl. Kanayakan A-3 Dago, Bandung 40135, Indonesia
tigabelas@hotmail.com
BALCONY / HARDER Recs & Collective: c/o Jl. Cihampelas 219A, Bandung, Indonesia
immortal@allofyourgodsaredead.com
www.balcore.org
www.harderrecords.org
ANJINGTANAH:
axtx666@yahoo.co.uk
DOMESTIK DOKTRIN / KONTRA PRODUKTIF Recs: c/o Ari, Jl. Mekarsari 5, Cibaduyut, Bandung 40235, Indonesia
combat_wounded_vegetarian@hotmail.com
ONELIFESTAND zine/ **TANPA BATAS**: c/o Ega, Jl.Mampang Prapatan 20 No.12, Jakarta Selatan 12760, Indonesia
onelifestand_zine@yahoo.com
satabapnat_tb@yahoo.com
CRYPTICAL DEATH: c/o Karib, Jl. Pulo Raya IV No.23, Jakarta Selatan 12170, Indonesia
leftside13@yahoo.com
BUNGA collective:
kolektifbunga@hotmail.com
www.bunga.isbeautiful.com
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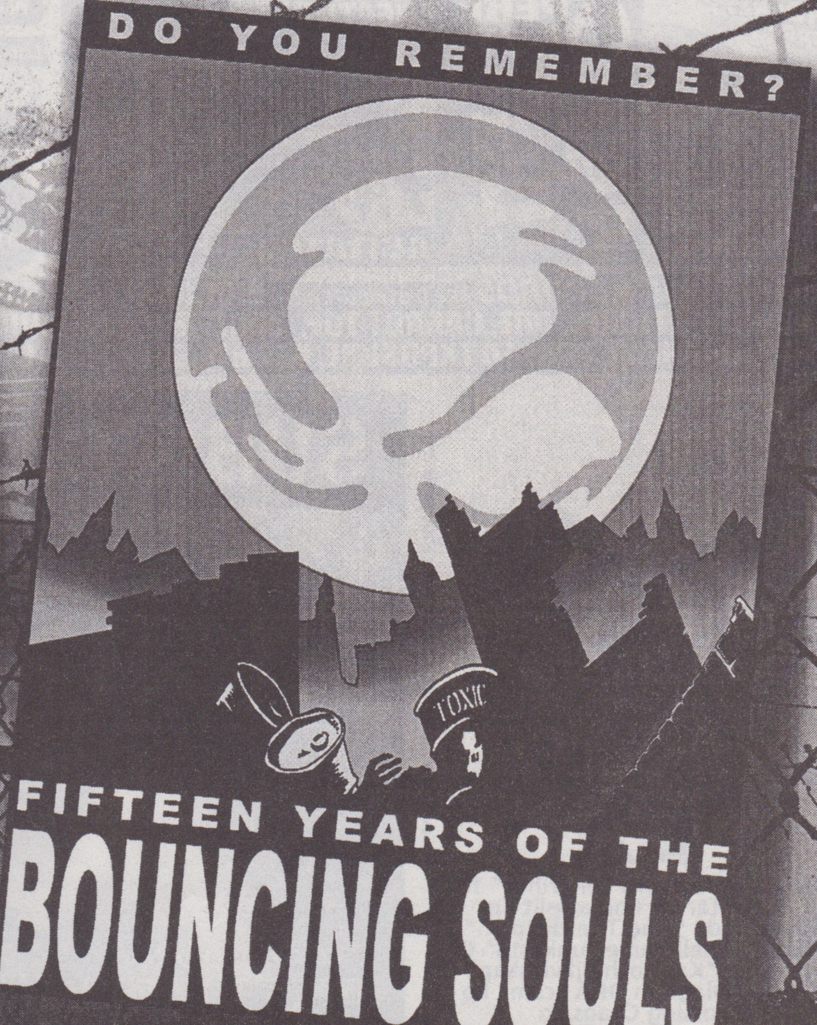

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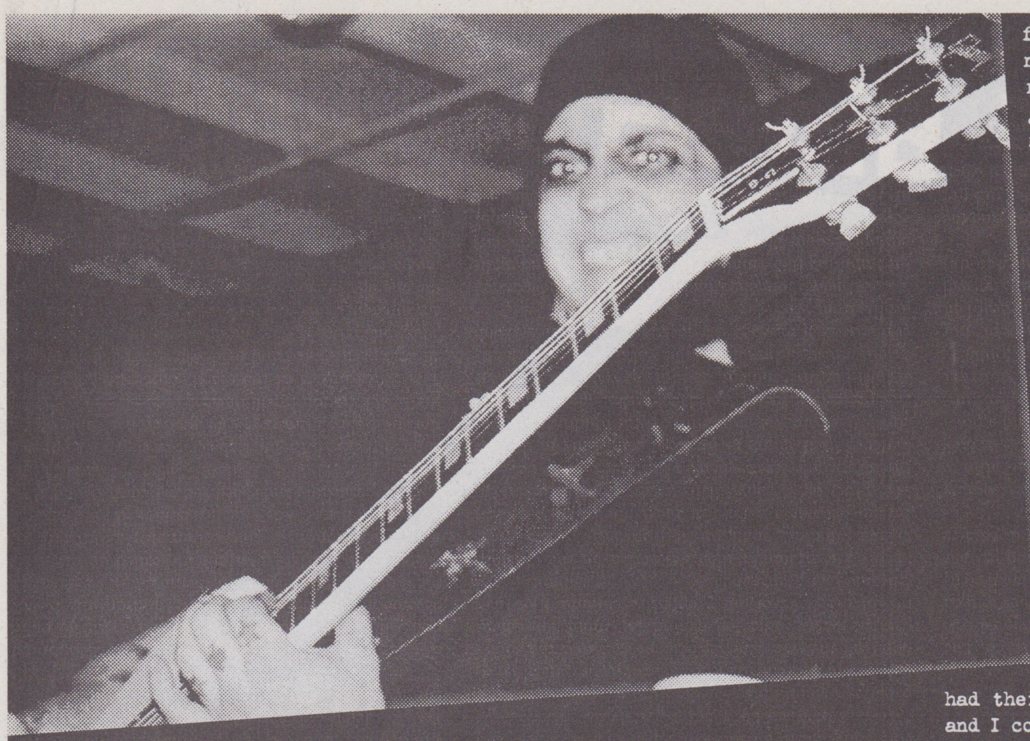
WORLD BURNS TO DEATH

חפאהד מף עסספב דכסמצ

If punk rockers need to remind themselves that punk rock is inherently angry music, they should look no further than WORLD BURNS TO DEATH, one of the most aggressive and pissed-off bands of recent memory. Along with several contemporaries like 9 Shocks Terror, Spazm 151 and Tragedy, WB2D have been instrumental in shifting the predominant style of hardcore away from gimmicky, feel-good trend-core toward a purer, more focused attack on the senses which never forgets that hardcore music and lyrics must angrily say "Fuck you!" at the world around us, live shows must be intense, and destructive rocknroll fun must be had by all (except the poseurs).



This started as an interview with World Burns to Death through Jack Control, who runs Mind Control Records, and sings in World Burns to Death. By the end, Jack wanted to pose some of the questions to other members of World Burns to Death, so their answers are mixed in. Interview by Stuart Schrader.

CONTROL- BLOOD AND GUTS
TEW- GUITAR/VOCALS
BOAT- GUITAR/VOCALS
MERRITT- BASS
GEURNOT- D-BEAT

MRR: If you can pick one, what is the most fulfilling punk activity for you? Doing a label or singing in a band?

JACK: Definitely not doing a label. Talk about a thankless money pit. At this point, twelve years into the label, I am right around $20,000 in debt. Starting up a label, most people assume that it should follow some type of formula, but it's really unpredictable. You cannot rely upon anybody to follow through with their end of any bargain. If everybody else that I deal with worked as hard as I do, and was reliable in regards with payment, I'd be a rich man by now. But it just doesn't work that way. I often forget that shit sells and everybody's buying. I think about all the fucking abominations that are passed off as punk bands these days, selling 10-20 thousand records, and I get really discouraged. I like the band aspect a lot more. It costs less, and I get to express myself more than through the label. I did a lot of the artwork for various records on Mind Control, but I prefer to do the artwork for my own bands, mostly because it's an expression of me.

MRR: Since you were probably the first person to have a large-scale tee-shirt and patch distro with obscure Japanese and European band designs, how do you feel about the current widespread popularity of foreign hardcore? Do you think it's a watered-down trend or is it just that the best music is finally receiving its due recognition? Also, how do you feel about lots of people making shirts for bands but perhaps never paying any royalties to the bands?

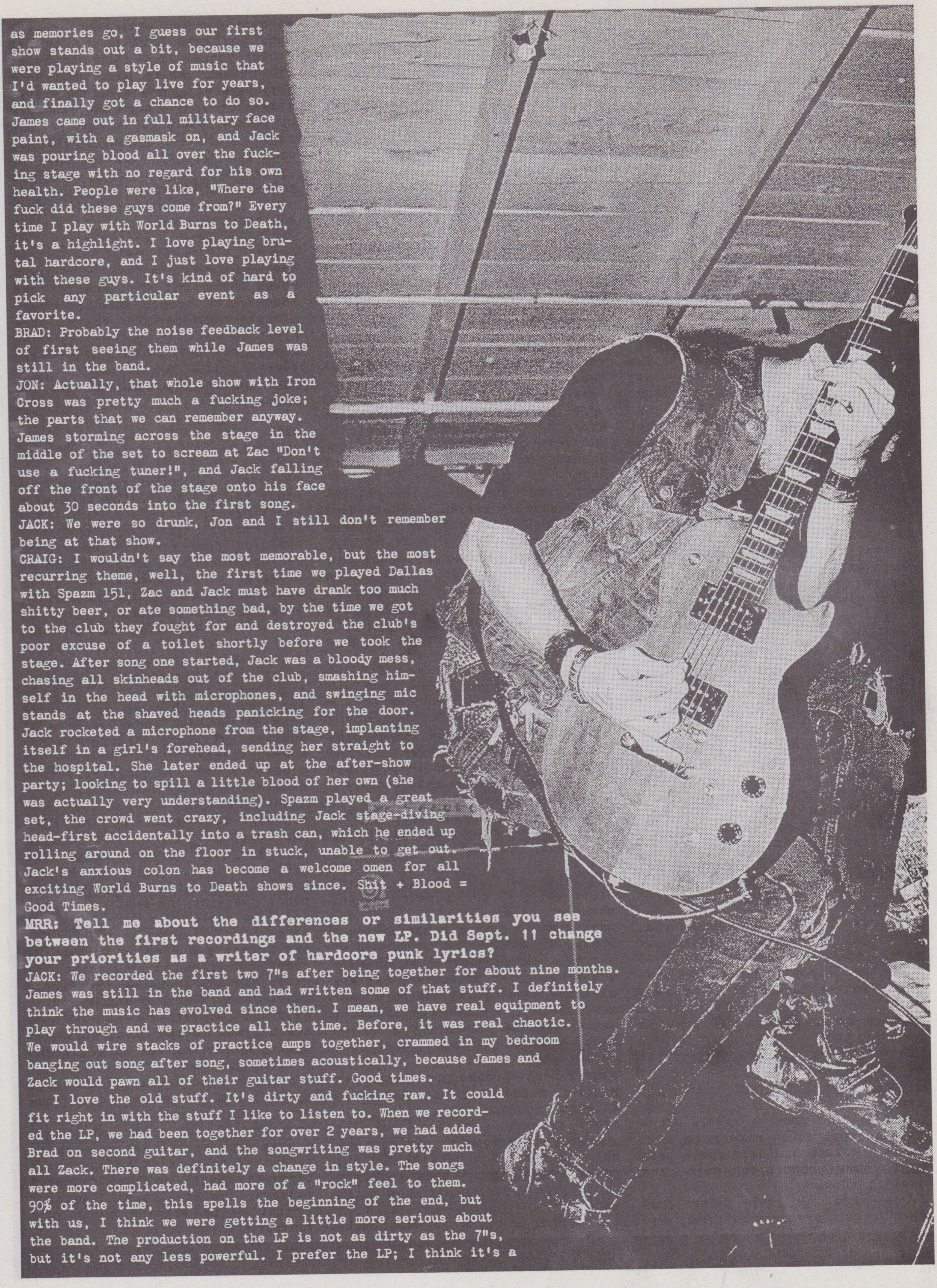
JACK: It's both. In the eighties, there was a pervasive attitude that if the band didn't sing in English, why bother. I knew people who would not even listen to British punk bands because they had an accent! I think that xenophobic mentality has passed somewhat. Of course now, it's hip to champion foreign bands, especially if they broke up around the time you were born. Growing up as a punk in the early eighties, my friend Scott Edgerton and I were the only people I knew who were crazy about Finnish, Swedish, Japanese, Dutch, and other international hardcore. Mercifully, there were people like Chris BCT, Pushead, and Tim Yohannon who we looked to help forge our tastes in music. I subscribed to Thrasher magazine for years and years, not for the skateboarding stuff, but just for Pushead's "Thrashzone" column. I'd read about a band in his column, and my mission for the month would be tracking down whatever I could find by that band. Living in Dallas, luckily there were a couple really great record stores that were brave enough to stock tons of current (at the time, '83-'86) foreign hardcore. Thinking back now about all the incredible records, new at the time, it just blows my mind. I kick myself all the time for passing over a lot of them. But make no mistake; every penny I had went to buying punk records. Fuck, I started working full time when I was thirteen, just to buy punk records!

I guess I started printing the shirts so I would have cool shirts to wear. Funny though, after a bunch of people were wearing them coast to coast, I didn't want to wear them anymore. Scott and Lyz from Antischism and I started printing those shirts as a business, thinking we could make an honest living while turning kids on to great bands. Well, I'm a terrible businessman, Scott and Lyz had their fill of me pretty early on, and I couldn't keep up with the massive flood of orders that was coming in. Plus, I was drinking a lot and sort of squatting at the time, so it was a disaster. I ended up selling everything to Felix, who was a much more capable businessman than I was. Things were pretty fucked up when he took it over. I never really got the chance to apologize to him for that or to thank him for making it right. Felix, I'm sorry, and thank you. Likewise, I owe Scott and Lyz an apology for laying a bit of the blame on them, and for being such a control freak. We did give bands shirts though. I guess that counts as royalties? We probably could have done a lot better.

MRR: What is each member's favorite memory of World Burns to Death?

JACK: First meeting Zack. He was all fucked up on pills and talking crazy shit to James and me. James's fist hit his face about the same time as my pint glass; it knocked him out cold for about 20 minutes. Poor Zack, we tossed his limp body out the back door, and he woke up in jail. I felt really bad for him, so the next time I saw him I asked him if he wanted to play guitar with us. He said we were the only crazy fuckers he would even consider playing with. Let's get one thing straight, Zack is a scrappy kid. He was crazy enough to slap Texas James' beer out of his hand. I guess mutual respect was won that night.

ZAC: Fuck, let's not over-glorify you guys beating me up because of my substance induced stupidity. I'm glad I don't remember that shit. In fact, I went around for weeks convinced that the cops had beaten me up until someone told me what had happened. As far



as memories go, I guess our first show stands out a bit, because we were playing a style of music that I'd wanted to play live for years, and finally got a chance to do so. James came out in full military face paint, with a gasmask on, and Jack was pouring blood all over the fucking stage with no regard for his own health. People were like, "Where the fuck did these guys come from?" Every time I play with World Burns to Death, it's a highlight. I love playing brutal hardcore, and I just love playing with these guys. It's kind of hard to pick any particular event as a favorite.

BRAD: Probably the noise feedback level of first seeing them while James was still in the band.

JON: Actually, that whole show with Iron Cross was pretty much a fucking joke; the parts that we can remember anyway. James storming across the stage in the middle of the set to scream at Zac "Don't use a fucking tuner!", and Jack falling off the front of the stage onto his face about 30 seconds into the first song.

JACK: We were so drunk, Jon and I still don't remember being at that show.

CRAIG: I wouldn't say the most memorable, but the most recurring theme, well, the first time we played Dallas with Spazm 151, Zac and Jack must have drank too much shitty beer, or ate something bad, by the time we got to the club they fought for and destroyed the club's poor excuse of a toilet shortly before we took the stage. After song one started, Jack was a bloody mess, chasing all skinheads out of the club, smashing himself in the head with microphones, and swinging mic stands at the shaved heads panicking for the door. Jack rocketed a microphone from the stage, implanting itself in a girl's forehead, sending her straight to the hospital. She later ended up at the after-show party; looking to spill a little blood of her own (she was actually very understanding). Spazm played a great set, the crowd went crazy, including Jack stage-diving head-first accidentally into a trash can, which he ended up rolling around on the floor in stuck, unable to get out. Jack's anxious colon has become a welcome omen for all exciting World Burns to Death shows since. Shit + Blood = Good Times.

MRR: Tell me about the differences or similarities you see between the first recordings and the new LP. Did Sept. 11 change your priorities as a writer of hardcore punk lyrics?

JACK: We recorded the first two 7"s after being together for about nine months. James was still in the band and had written some of that stuff. I definitely think the music has evolved since then. I mean, we have real equipment to play through and we practice all the time. Before, it was real chaotic. We would wire stacks of practice amps together, crammed in my bedroom banging out song after song, sometimes acoustically, because James and Zack would pawn all of their guitar stuff. Good times.

I love the old stuff. It's dirty and fucking raw. It could fit right in with the stuff I like to listen to. When we recorded the LP, we had been together for over 2 years, we had added Brad on second guitar, and the songwriting was pretty much all Zack. There was definitely a change in style. The songs were more complicated, had more of a "rock" feel to them. 90% of the time, this spells the beginning of the end, but with us, I think we were getting a little more serious about the band. The production on the LP is not as dirty as the 7"s, but it's not any less powerful. I prefer the LP; I think it's a fucking sledgehammer production job. A lot of people say they prefer the anguished production of the 7's.

We just recorded nine new songs for 7"s on Fight and Prank, and a split 7" with Sao Paulo's Sick Terror on Terrotten in Brazil. The production on the new stuff is somewhere in between the LP and the first 7"s. Very *Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing* type stuff. We are very happy with it.

September 11th did not change my priorities as a writer of hardcore punk lyrics but it did give me a lot more material to work with. Not the trite "planes crashing into buildings" type of stuff, I'll save that for Elton John or someone. The stuff that the U.S. has pulled as a result and since then is absolutely fucking dubious. The lyrical coffers are flowing over in a way not seen since the days of Reagan.

MRR: How would you explain Texas's rich punk history? Do you think the conditions that produced the classic bands of the early '80s are still in existence and do they affect World Burns to Death? Is there anything that makes you a "Texas" band?

JACK: An oppressive political climate, combined with an ingrained spirit of individualism. Let's not forget that Texas was the only state to be its own independent country, before being a part of six others! I do think these elements still exist, in much the same way that they existed in the early 80s; they most definitely affect World Burns to Death. The only difference is that there are more elements at play now. We have a complex cultural punk history now that we can learn from. We are most definitely a "Texas" band. Even though we opened the ranks to a Mississippi boy, he's a Texan at heart (wink, wink). "Hardcore Texas Fuckin' James" was in our band, how could we not be a "Texas" band?

MRR: Explain why places like New York haven't produced any relevant hardcore bands since the early '90s while Texas, in the last two years, has turned out Spazm 151 and World Burns to Death, two bands that have helped re-shape the hardcore scene.

JACK: I cannot explain that. That's for New Yorkers to figure out. I would assume that the conditions exist there that would spawn good bands, but the last classic band I remember from New York City was HeartAttack! I didn't really go for any of that homoerotic youth crew crap that New York was cranking out for years. Citizens Arrest was good, but the relationship to both Hell No and Animal Crackers ruined them for me. Born Against were good, not original, but good until they decided to be an emo band. I really do think it's something in the water in Texas. Proof positive: all the incredible bands like DRI, Dicks, Stains (MDC), Legionnaires Disease Band all moved in a mass exodus to San Francisco in the 80s, then sucked real bad. Only a few stayed, and those bands continued to produce great music. The modern equivalent is every small town big fish abandoning their roots and the people who rely upon them for the false Mecca of Portland. While I have a lot of friends who live there, most of the time they just end up stagnant and depressed there. Fuck, for such a punk promised land, why hasn't Portland been able to establish any type of DIY all ages show space in, what, 10 years? And let's hope that these small town heroes, and I won't name names, don't follow the horrid example set by the great expatriate Texas punk bands of times past.

MRR: Do you think that insane live shows where kids go crazy and throw shit and blow shit up and fly through the air are radical politically or are they just dumb fun or both? Since I've never seen World Burns to Death play, I don't know, but I assume you don't make many political speeches from the stage. Why not...or if you do, why? And also, why write political lyrics at all?

JON: I think people should look to music to express how they feel about something. If you can't find a way to express yourself, start a punk band. In what other music style can you be pissed off about something and have the rhythm and lyrics to match your animosity?

JACK: I really don't think that has anything to do with politics. It may be a vehicle for expressing aggression and frustration caused by some political issue or motivation, but it's not political in and of itself. Make no mistake, there is absolutely nothing wrong with dumb fun. I do not make political speeches between songs. It interrupts the momentum of the set, I don't pretend to have the answers that kids want to hear, and I don't insult them by assuming that they are ignorant of the issues we sing about. In fact, if you read our lyrics, there are no answers. Not a statement about how things *should* be, just a statement on how things *are*. Discharge did not offer any answers, just observations and a bleak forecast for human-kind.

BRAD: I would definitely agree with Jack. I see playing shows and explaining lyrics/songs as a cathartic outlet. It's a "We want people to know where we stand" kind of thing. Politics can definitely infiltrate aesthetics and I think they do with this band.

MRR: Two questions that relate to recent discussions I've had: Is World Burns to Death art? Do you think DIY hardcore punk as you express it is part of some larger form of protest against the system or is it its own entity? Another way to phrase this question is: does World Burns to Death writing lyrics about the sucking of the missile cock have anything to do with the larger anti-war movement which is currently puppeteering outside the White House?

JACK: Oh god, the art question! Art is that medium by which people prove they have no creativity. I suppose World Burns to Death is art, outsider art. Monkeys make art. A man who blows his brains out onto a canvas creates art, the ultimate expression of depression and angst. So yeah, World Burns to Death is art. World Burns to Death and DIY punk, to me, are their own entities. It is a legitimate and effective means of propagating our political views and lifestyles. To me, it is a much more far reaching and honest means of getting this across than making giant puppets or forming one of those detestable radical cheerleader squads. C'mon, how did unicycle riding, puppet making, cheerleading, fire twirling, beard growing, seed swapping, clown tolerating, brown Carhartt overall wearing, hokum gather any legitimacy as a viable means of political protest? And more importantly, at what point was it ever allowed to be even remotely affiliated with punk rock? I would rather be at a fucking sheriff's convention than be involved in anything these barefoot assholes have anything to do with. How many times have you encountered the situation where punks are sharing a show space with an activist group, only to have the inevitable anti-punk vibe arise? "Oh, you're still into that?" or "We really would like to avoid the punk element here". Well, fuck you. I'm drawing the line right here: No beards in punk rock. No clowns or mimes in punk rock, and goddammit, no fucking overalls in punk rock. You goofy fucking hippies, go wobbly-ise the pampered coffee shop you work part time at, but please, I beseech you, sever all ties with punk culture immediately. I just can't fucking take this Woodstock bullshit any longer.

JON: The song "The Sucking of the Missile Cock" is clearly about patriotic punks. For some fucking reason, you are now coming across all of this so-called unity in this country and support for a war that was started way before September 11th. You see punks screaming "Anarchy" and "Fuck the System" while at the same time supporting these fucking shitbags by waving flags and joining the army. If you want to call pointing out the painfully obvious art, then go right ahead. Personally, I think it is beautiful chaos.

BRAD: Well, it's fun, and when Zack writes songs, his guitar parts aren't secondary to some lyrical agenda that has already been established. I guess it is art in its own form. Everyone has their own part. Noise or music, whatever you call it, it's just expression. I think our lyrics, viewpoints, etc. are definitely valid, but I also believe it would be a bit arrogant to claim politics above music as priority while we're holding guitars. I'm a musician; it's the only thing I know, so I'm not going to cheat myself out of that. I enjoy being a musician, but we have a forum in lyrics backed by music, so we might as well make the most of it.

ZAC: World Burns to Death is most certainly art. On the same token, art is a direct reflection of those who create it. World Burns to Death, as a group of individuals, creates a statement, both lyrically and graphically, that we all can comfortably call our own. All forms of expression seem to move human beings in one way or another, regardless of how subtle. I think our views are clear, and they come across boldly with what we produce. We are just feeding the flames with our expression.

MRR: Big Boys or Dicks?

JACK: For me, the Dicks. While I love the Big Boys punk stuff, their meanderings into funk territory really do nothing for me. The Dicks on the other hand, I think most people worth their grain of salt will attest that The Dicks *Hate the Police* is hands down the best punk 7" ever created. *Kill from the Heart* LP is just raw and full of rage, *Live at Raul's* is classic. While a handful of their stuff after Gary moved to San Francisco is listenable, it's not Buxf, Glen, and Pat. It's such a shame that Glen died of liver failure a while back, as the Dicks would do unannounced reunion shows here in Austin every now and then. We also lost my friend Bobby Soxx to liver failure a couple years back. It was a tragic loss to Texas punk. Bobby was a fucking legend here. His 7" is in a fucking fistfight with the Dicks for best 7" ever.

BRAD: The Dicks, but I have to disagree with Jack about the Big Boys funk stuff.

MRR: World Burns to Death in Brazil? Where and what else?

JACK: Brasil Queimando para a Morte! Brazilian tour March 26th to April 6th. Heartfelt gratitude and major respect to Fabio and Renan in Brazil, and to Jay and Tifani at Hardcore Holocaust for helping us get to Brazil. Thanks to real punks, the handful left anyway. Respect to our friends, a pox on our enemies.

DISCOGRAPHY

Human Meat… Tossed to the Dogs of War 7" out now on Prank.

The Sucking of the Missile Cock LP out now on Hardcore Holocaust.

Out by the time you read this:

World Burns to Death 7" on Fight.

No Dawn Comes… Night Without End 7" on Hardcore Holocaust.

The Art of Self Destruction 7" on Prank.

Curse Them Forever (Praguejando Para Sempre) split 7" with Sick Terror on Terrotten (Brazil only).

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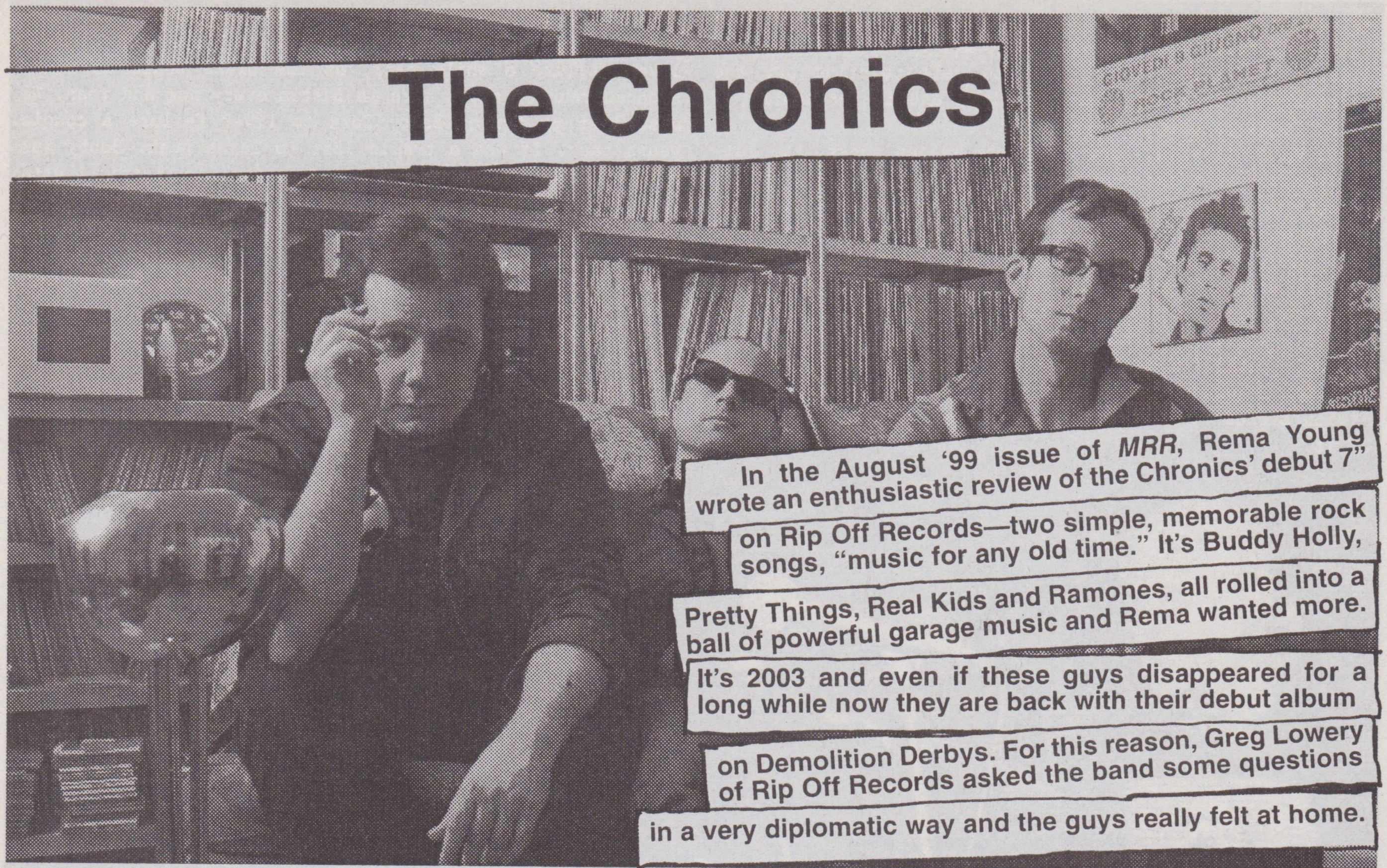
The Chronics



In the August '99 issue of *MRR*, Rema Young wrote an enthusiastic review of the Chronics' debut 7" on Rip Off Records—two simple, memorable rock songs, "music for any old time." It's Buddy Holly, Pretty Things, Real Kids and Ramones, all rolled into a ball of powerful garage music and Rema wanted more. It's 2003 and even if these guys disappeared for a long while now they are back with their debut album on Demolition Derbys. For this reason, Greg Lowery of Rip Off Records asked the band some questions in a very diplomatic way and the guys really felt at home.

MRR: OK. who are you guys, why should MRR care about your band, and where are you from?

Stefano: Ok, we come from Bologna, Italy but you should know that 'cos I got a fantastic gig in these parts for your band last year. Yeah, we are three Italian r'n'r fans and we play r'n'r music; you Americans invented it but Italians can do it properly if they want and *MRR* can't act as if nothing had happened, the readers must know. But above all we are here to promote the LP we have just put out on Demolition Derby. An LP entitled *It's Too Late* because a lot of time has passed since we put out our first 7". You know, Italians are lazy people.

MRR: Some other band has the same name as the Chronics, were you first, and they ripped you off, or was it the other way around? Have you heard that other band?

Stefano: I dunno if they ripped us off, but we were around before them. It was 2001 the first time we heard of this Swedish band and our 7" came out in early 1999. Anyway, more than two bands have the same name as the Chronics, so if it helps we'll be the Real Chronics, even if none of us like pot. We are the Chronics because we keep on playin' r'n'r and garage-music and nobody cares about it.

MRR: The single "First Time, Best Time" on Rip Off Records came out two years ago. Why the big delay in getting an LP together?

Shiba: In 2000 our line up changed; our bass player Gabriele had different plans of action so we split up for a while and then Stefano asked Roberto to join the band.

Roberto: They were groping in the dark and I saved their souls.

Stefano: Shut up! It took quite a long time to find a new balance and writing new stuff so here we are again, the Chronics.

Shiba: Yes, we come back to resume power.

MRR: How would you describe your sound?

Stefano: I've always loved the Pretty Things, the Pagans, Buddy Holly and Velvet Underground as well. I think you can hear a little bit of this thrown in our music. Garage-rock, r'n'r, punk rock? I don't know.

Shiba: I think we have quite a personal style after all. Of course when you play music people notice if you have listened to the Real Kids or the Buzzcocks, but it's in the game.

Roberto: Shiba, you're a wise man, you always hit the mark, I can't stand it! Anyway it's Rock'n'roll, it's simple!

MRR: Why did you start playing music in the first place? Sex? Fame? Free Drugs?

Stefano: Fame in the first place, 'cos all the rest is the consequence of fame. Fame, sex, but above all an intellectual need (laughs)

Roberto: Hey, remember we are not famous. Your reasons are not very clear to me. You promised many things when I joined your band, you're a liar.

Stefano: Hey, take it easy, I won't go back on my word. You'll be terribly rich and all the girls will adore you, etc, etc.

MRR: The United States sucks to play live unless you are some teenager's fantasy fake punk band like the Donnas or Green Day. Does Italy suck as bad as that?

Shiba: In Italy it's the same and even worse if you are Italian and you sing in English.

Roberto: Yeah, only cover-bands, Italian pop singers and foreign bands don't have big problems to play live and win popularity. For example, there was a good number of spectators at Covo when the Zodiac Killers played in Bologna and the same day the International Noise Conspiracy played at a different club in town.

Stefano: The Swedish are everywhere. A population of seven millions and it seems each one of them plays music, but we'll die hard.

MRR: How come I'm not getting to put your full length out?

Stefano: You already know why you're not getting to put it out.

MRR: Yeah, but the readers want to know.

Stefano: Ok, we had it from a good source. You were working on the new Green Day songs and you were too busy to pay attention to us. But I agree with you: first money, then pleasure. I know, your version is different; too many bands were waiting before us and it wasn't nice to pass over them (it wasn't a problem). So I asked another label to put it out. Rip Off and Demolition Derby both are great labels. Demolition Derby published the New Bomb Turks and the Electric Frankenstein, just to name a few. Kris Verreth works in a good way and we are very glad to be on his label.

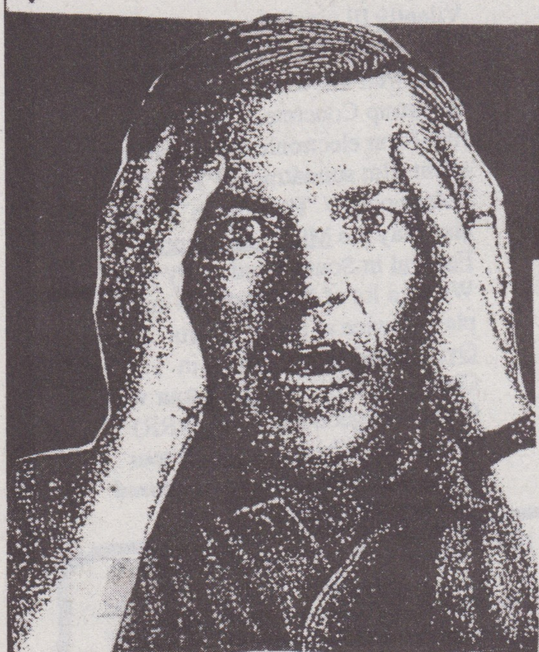
MRR: Now a classic question; your future plans?

Stefano: First of all we wanna keep our rock'n'roll as honest and unbullshit as possible. We will record new stuff and put it out on Rip Off, Demolition Derby. What else?

Roberto: Play live and put up our website (www.thechronics.org).

Contacts: realchronic@hotmail.com

vilently ill



VILENTLY ILL
has bEEN blasting
Out EArLY 80's USHC
StylED MAYhEM for
8 YEArs Now. After
7 45's, 1 LP AND
NUMEROUS Comp trAX
+ DEMO TAPES - MRR
CAught UP with thE
ONE MAN HC PUNK unit-
AND HE PAUSED JUST
Long Enough to Answer
Some questions.
INTERVIEW BY ROY

Could you introduce yorself—Andrew Lersten? The man behind Vilently Ill. What do you do outside of Vilently Ill?

For my main income, I work as a news writer for an area newspaper, covering everyday mundane reality such as murders, car crashes, hailstorms, shootings and beatings, politics and business, and city council and school board meetings. I've been a journalist for 15 years. But music is my life, my passion and my obsession. Mainly I'm into hardcore punkrock—the short, fast, loud and pissed off variety. I also play and listen to a lot of pure noise and experimental/ electronic music too. I also run the Knot Music label and distro, ride my bicycle, drink lots of beer and spend quality time with my girlfriend!

How and when did you get into underground music and punk?

I learned about punk rock through the only cultural bridge I could find while growing up in Ames, Iowa in the late 1970's: Creem magazines I bought at the mall…Creem was always hyping the Ramones along with my faves at the time, Kiss, so on the strength of their Endorsement I bought the Ramones' "Leave Home" LP and it stayed glued to my turntable for years. Except for the Ramones, I was a music nerd until the H.C. explosion of 1981. I gradually got more involved with punk music, and was in college when the whole Hardcore explosion happened. I went to many local shows, but I didn't pick up a guitar until a couple of years later. My first punk band was a total disaster. I had just moved to South Haven, Michigan in 1989, and the bass player for the God Bullies was working for his dads restaurant right across the street, at this campground place, and told me he was planning a huge outdoor punk music festival there. I lied and told him I had a band, even though I could barely play two chords on my guitar and there was no band. So I managed to weasel my way onto the bill, and me and some friends slapped together a set and a month later we were opening for the Cows and the God Bullies! We totally sucked: I still have the live tape and it makes me cringe. We went under the name Black Market White Boys. The next few years I played in area punk bands like the Lawndarts, Discount Dogs and Better DisEase.

How did Vilently Ill start? Why a one man band?

Nobody really wanted to play the short, fast kind of hardcore I loved from the 1981-85 era, so in 1991 I decided to start recording my own stuff, my own way, as Vilently Ill. The first 7inch came out in 1994. All Vilently Ill recordings have been done at home, in my living room, except for some tracks recorded in 1995 at a studio that appeared on a few compilation records and CDs ("No Fate III," "Grind in the Mind," "Accidental Double Homicide"). I like the home recording approach better, because I think the raw production goes well with the primitive music. Plus I can record stuff anytime I want, and I can do it in my underwear. I'm not a one man band- I'm not a novelty band. I'm a hardcore band. I'm just a guy who wanted to play thrash but couldn't find a drummer, so I bought a drum machine. People don't really seem to make a big deal about the "one-man-band-thing" and actually I think a lot of people who hear the records assume there is 3 or 4 of us. It's never really been an issue.

FULL
VOLUME
ZONE™

You mentioned you've been a journalist for over 15 years. Have you been a rock critic? Do you like Richard Meltzer? Lester Bangs? Just curious.

Everyone should own Lester Bang's book "Psychotic Reactions and Carburetor Dung". He was a Big influence on me—great writer, hedonist, sex, drugs, rock n roll. In my early teen years I was ready for his kind of know-it-all thing, which was real personal. Of course, he committed suicide (drug OD) too, which always adds to the mythology.

Is there any sort of scene around South Haven, MI? Any shows? Does Vilently Ill play out? Any area bands you like?

No. I do play out here and there, but it's like overcoming inertia. I have to take apart my home stereo, haul it around and drive somewhere (usually very far), drag the shit in, play a 15-minute set (like I wish more bands did!), then do it all over again, in reverse. It almost doesn't seem like it's worth it, though I usually find out in the end it was. I guess I'm just getting too old 'n' cranky to go out on tour, or live in a smelly van. Especially when I can just plug in my axe at home, whenever I want, and just start kicking ass without any hassles. The only other hardcore punk band in South Haven the Sweethearts. Those guys were fast and crazy, and their guitar player used to play without a pick, so he would be bleeding halfway through their set! The Drummer was the stepson of our local police chief.

Your records have such a great fuck off attitude with angry lyrics about not fitting in, killing posers etc. Is VI the vehicle for venting that rage or is that just part of the '82 style H.C. sound? My guess is the former.

Hate as therapy, baby. Get it all out…there used to be a great Saturday night radio show in Iowa City ('81-85') called the "Guilt and Revenge Hour"—that about sums it up!

How can people get in touch with you to get Vilently Ill records? Are most of them out of print ? Will they be repressed?

I think I do the public a big service by not making my earlier records available. They were in part, ratty, crappy, half-assed. All the pressings have been small, and so far I have never repressed anything. Once it's sold out it's on to the next project. I think that's a good way to go. The new stuff is way superior to the old 7"ers, so grab the LP while it's still here: Knot Music Pob 501 South Haven, MI 49090-0501 ($8 ppd US/ $12 world) **Editors note- seek out the old records while you still can—well worth your effort.**

THREE THINGS I CAN BRAG ABOUT BECAUSE I'M SUCH AN OLD FART (Turned 40 in November!) :

1. Seeing the amazing Circle Jerks live. - in 1983 - in their prime, at the Crow's Nest in Iowa City, Iowa. Local heroes Stiff Legged Sheep was the opening act. I also saw Fang, Husker Du, X, Die Kreuzen while going to college in Iowa City 1981-85.
2. Buying the Neos "Martian Brain Squeeze" 7", Th' Inbred 7" and the Antidote 7" for a grand total of three dollars at Wax Trax! Records in Chicago's used bin in 1985
3. Getting the wind knocked out of me during vicious slam dancing at a 1986 Black Flag concert in Grand Rapids, Mich., in a shitty rental hall in a scary part of town…during "Gimmie Gimmie Gimmie," of course. Funny thing is, the same damn thing happened to me at a Pist concert 10 years later, also in Grand Rapids. Some people, like me, aren't really meant for slam dancing. I wrote a Vilently Ill song about the dangers of such dancing, called "Macho Death Trip."

What's next for Vilently Ill? The new batch of songs you sent me are I think some of your best yet. What do you plan to do with those songs?

Anyone who wants to put out the 2nd Vilently Ill LP (no fuckin' CDs) get in touch with me.

Introduce Knot Music and tell us a bit about it: How, when, and why it started.

I started it all up basically just as an outlet to release Vilently Ill's 1st 7inch in 1994. I never have made it into a real big label. I'm proud of having been able to put out some mid-90's hardcore punk music from friend's bands in Grand Rapids and Grand Haven (Wound, Religious Fucks and Decay) that most likely would otherwise have never made it to vinyl.

Tell us about Concrete and your noise experiments. I Swear I've seen a Haters tour video with you in it—true?

You're close—funny, in any other context other than MRR, Vilently Ill would be considered my "side band", because overall I'm more well known for my work with the group Concrete. Concrete is free-form electronic noise and does silent film soundtracks ("Faust"/ "Metropolis"/ "Potempkin")—we also play the Michigan Improv Festival in South Bend every year. We do a lot of film festivals and played twice at Roger Eberts Overlooked Film Festival in Champaign, Ill. We did a tour with Crank Sturgeon and Emil (RRR) Beaulieau. There is an RRR tour video where my guitar gets abused with kitchen utensils.

I've noticed a lot of what I perceive as '60's imagery in your record artwork. Does Vilently Ill identify with the struggle and upheaval of that period or am I way off here? The song "Flower In Your Gun" is one example , your side of the Mr. California split 7" has a '60's feel .

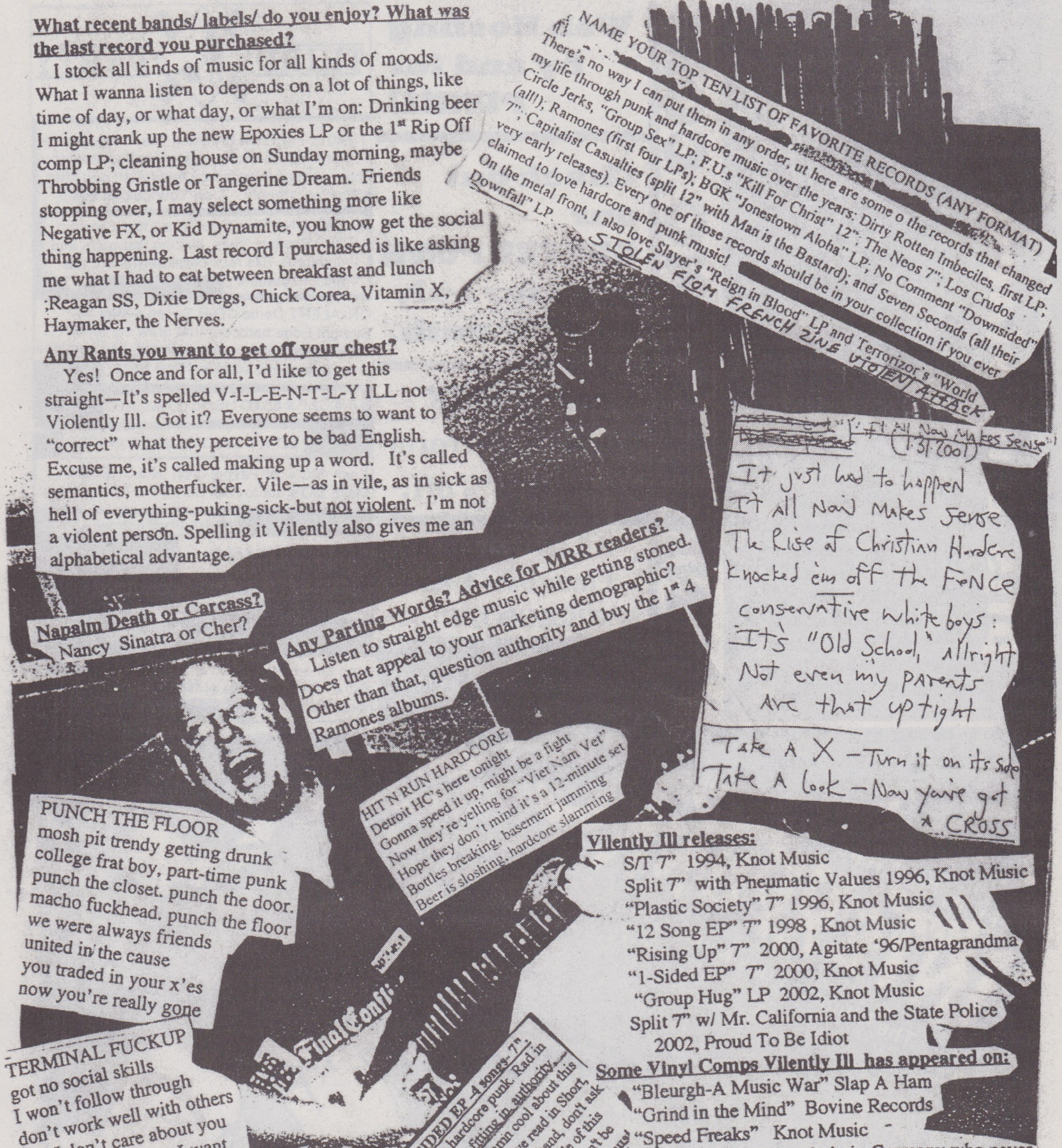
The Upheaval of the late '60's and early '70's (war protests, culture wars) still resonate today—especially with the war drums beating again. Also there's just so many great images of confrontations from that era. The cover of my first 7" featured photos of cops beating the shit out of people. One of our local state police sergeants, who is also a county comissioner, told me his kid had one of my records—I hoped it wasn't that one.

What recent bands/ labels/ do you enjoy? What was the last record you purchased?

I stock all kinds of music for all kinds of moods. What I wanna listen to depends on a lot of things, like time of day, or what day, or what I'm on: Drinking beer I might crank up the new Epoxies LP or the 1st Rip Off comp LP; cleaning house on Sunday morning, maybe Throbbing Gristle or Tangerine Dream. Friends stopping over, I may select something more like Negative FX, or Kid Dynamite, you know get the social thing happening. Last record I purchased is like asking me what I had to eat between breakfast and lunch ;Reagan SS, Dixie Dregs, Chick Corea, Vitamin X, Haymaker, the Nerves.

Any Rants you want to get off your chest?

Yes! Once and for all, I'd like to get this straight—It's spelled V-I-L-E-N-T-L-Y ILL not Violently Ill. Got it? Everyone seems to want to "correct" what they perceive to be bad English. Excuse me, it's called making up a word. It's called semantics, motherfucker. Vile—as in vile, as in sick as hell of everything-puking-sick-but not violent. I'm not a violent person. Spelling it Vilently also gives me an alphabetical advantage.



NAME YOUR TOP TEN LIST OF FAVORITE RECORDS (ANY FORMAT)

There's no way I can put them in any order, ut here are some o the records that changed my life through punk and hardcore music over the years: Dirty Rotten Imbeciles, first LP; Circle Jerks, "Group Sex" LP; F.U.s "Kill For Christ" 12"; The Neos 7"; Los Crudos (all!); Ramones (first four LPs); BGK "Jonestown Aloha" LP; No Comment "Downsided" 7"; Capitalist Casualties (split 12" with Man is the Bastard); and Seven Seconds (all their very early releases). Every one of those records should be in your collection if you ever claimed to love hardcore and punk music! On the metal front, I also love Slayer's "Reign in Blood" LP and Terrorizor's "World Downfall" LP.

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"It All Now Makes Sense"
(1.31.2001)

It just had to happen
It all now makes sense
The Rise of Christian Hardcore
Knocked em off the Fence
conservative white boys:
It's "Old School," allright
Not even my parents
Are that uptight

Take A X — Turn it on its side
Take A look — Now you've got
A CROSS

Napalm Death or Carcass?

Nancy Sinatra or Cher?

Any Parting Words? Advice for MRR readers?

Listen to straight edge music while getting stoned. Does that appeal to your marketing demographic? Other than that, question authority and buy the 1st 4 Ramones albums.

HIT N RUN HARDCORE
Detroit HC's here tonight
Gonna speed it up, might be a fight
Now they're yelling for "Viet Nam Vet"
Hope they don't mind it's a 12-minute set
Bottles breaking, basement jamming
Beer is sloshing, hardcore slamming

PUNCH THE FLOOR
mosh pit trendy getting drunk
college frat boy, part-time punk
punch the closet. punch the door.
macho fuckhead. punch the floor
we were always friends
united in the cause
you traded in your x'es
now you're really gone

TERMINAL FUCKUP
got no social skills
I won't follow through
don't work well with others
and I don't care about you
I'm gonna do what I want
I'm gonna do what I please
too bad for you
when I see you on the street
my heart's gonna skip a beat
cuz I told you I'd be at work today
I lied
I'm just a terminal fuckup.

VILENTLY ILL: ONE-SIDED EP -4 songs- 7".

Fast distorted chaotic '82 style hardcore punk. Rad in your face lyrics about anger, not fitting in, authority, and killing posers. And what's so damn cool about this e.p. is the general 'fuck off' attitude. I've read in Short, Fast,+Loud! zine that this is a one man band, don't ask me how he does it. There are only 300 made of this record, so you better get it right now. You won't be disapointed, unless you're an emo dork. (Knot mu

Vilently Ill releases:

S/T 7" 1994, Knot Music
Split 7" with Pneumatic Values 1996, Knot Music
"Plastic Society" 7" 1996, Knot Music
"12 Song EP" 7" 1998 , Knot Music
"Rising Up" 7" 2000, Agitate '96/Pentagrandma
"1-Sided EP" 7" 2000, Knot Music
"Group Hug" LP 2002, Knot Music
Split 7" w/ Mr. California and the State Police 2002, Proud To Be Idiot

Some Vinyl Comps Vilently Ill has appeared on:

"Bleurgh-A Music War" Slap A Ham
"Grind in the Mind" Bovine Records
"Speed Freaks" Knot Music
"Onslaught" some asshole in Germany who never sent a copy
"Deadly Encounters" Agitate 96
"Accidental Double Homicide" Satan's Pimp

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TPR010 No Time Left 'Zero Effort Solution' CDEP Positive lyrics, blazing fast parts and thunderous 70's rock breakdowns are this band's trademark.

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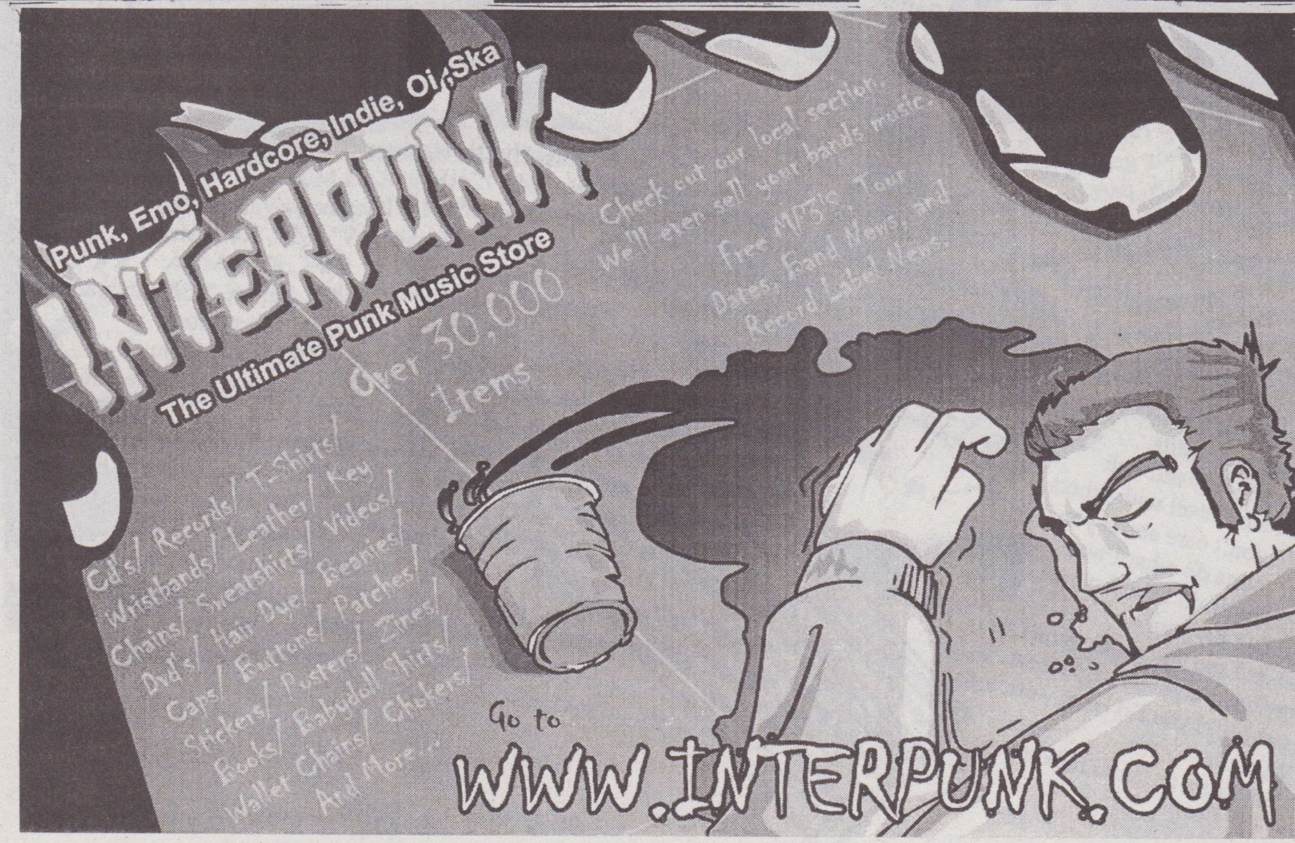
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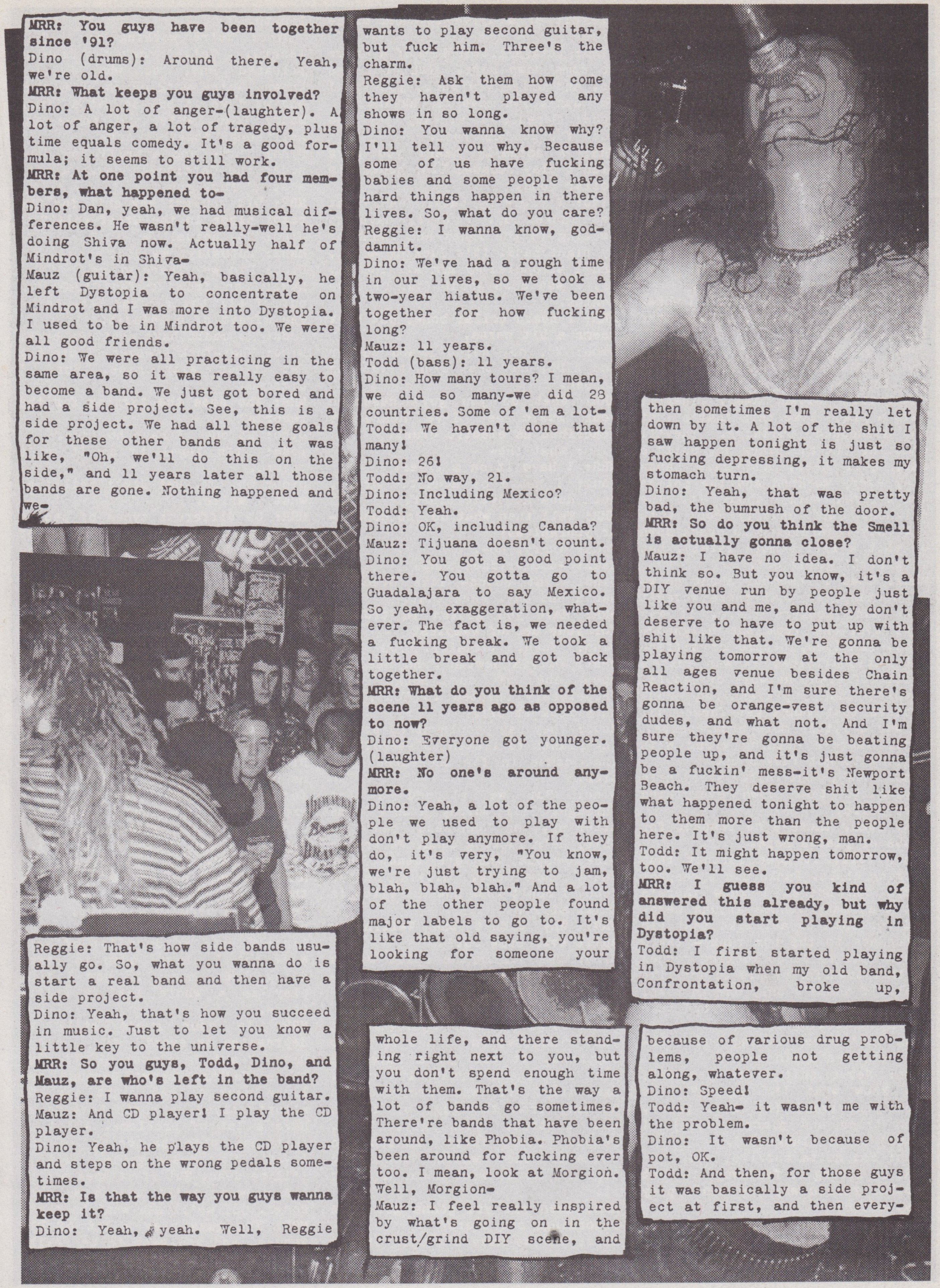
A little background on this interview. Dystopia is a doom ridden, metal laced down tuned punk band with a huge following that hasn't played shows in around two years. So when they came to LA, the shit hit the fan. First off, the only punk friendly venue in LA (The Smell) might stop doing shows because of the crazy shit that went on—like 40's being broken, walls being broken and a bum rush at the door after the limit was reached. The room was packed and sweaty with smoke because the doors were shut. But all eyes were on them and they delivered powerfully depressing music. If LA's going down, at least it went with a blast. Interview by Sergio Amalfitano. Cast of characters includes all of Dystopia and Reggie (runs The Smell, better known for singing in Gasp) So here it is...

Dystopia



MRR: You guys have been together since '91?
Dino (drums): Around there. Yeah, we're old.
MRR: What keeps you guys involved?
Dino: A lot of anger-(laughter). A lot of anger, a lot of tragedy, plus time equals comedy. It's a good formula; it seems to still work.
MRR: At one point you had four members, what happened to-
Dino: Dan, yeah, we had musical differences. He wasn't really-well he's doing Shiva now. Actually half of Mindrot's in Shiva-
Mauz (guitar): Yeah, basically, he left Dystopia to concentrate on Mindrot and I was more into Dystopia. I used to be in Mindrot too. We were all good friends.
Dino: We were all practicing in the same area, so it was really easy to become a band. We just got bored and had a side project. See, this is a side project. We had all these goals for these other bands and it was like, "Oh, we'll do this on the side," and 11 years later all those bands are gone. Nothing happened and we-
Reggie: That's how side bands usually go. So, what you wanna do is start a real band and then have a side project.
Dino: Yeah, that's how you succeed in music. Just to let you know a little key to the universe.
MRR: So you guys, Todd, Dino, and Mauz, are who's left in the band?
Reggie: I wanna play second guitar.
Mauz: And CD player! I play the CD player.
Dino: Yeah, he plays the CD player and steps on the wrong pedals sometimes.
MRR: Is that the way you guys wanna keep it?
Dino: Yeah, yeah. Well, Reggie wants to play second guitar, but fuck him. Three's the charm.
Reggie: Ask them how come they haven't played any shows in so long.
Dino: You wanna know why? I'll tell you why. Because some of us have fucking babies and some people have hard things happen in there lives. So, what do you care?
Reggie: I wanna know, goddamnit.
Dino: We've had a rough time in our lives, so we took a two-year hiatus. We've been together for how fucking long?
Mauz: 11 years.
Todd (bass): 11 years.
Dino: How many tours? I mean, we did so many-we did 28 countries. Some of 'em a lot-
Todd: We haven't done that many!
Dino: 26!
Todd: No way, 21.
Dino: Including Mexico?
Todd: Yeah.
Dino: OK, including Canada?
Mauz: Tijuana doesn't count.
Dino: You got a good point there. You gotta go to Guadalajara to say Mexico. So yeah, exaggeration, whatever. The fact is, we needed a fucking break. We took a little break and got back together.
MRR: What do you think of the scene 11 years ago as opposed to now?
Dino: Everyone got younger. (laughter)
MRR: No one's around anymore.
Dino: Yeah, a lot of the people we used to play with don't play anymore. If they do, it's very, "You know, we're just trying to jam, blah, blah, blah." And a lot of the other people found major labels to go to. It's like that old saying, you're looking for someone your whole life, and there standing right next to you, but you don't spend enough time with them. That's the way a lot of bands go sometimes. There're bands that have been around, like Phobia. Phobia's been around for fucking ever too. I mean, look at Morgion. Well, Morgion-
Mauz: I feel really inspired by what's going on in the crust/grind DIY scene, and then sometimes I'm really let down by it. A lot of the shit I saw happen tonight is just so fucking depressing, it makes my stomach turn.
Dino: Yeah, that was pretty bad, the bumrush of the door.
MRR: So do you think the Smell is actually gonna close?
Mauz: I have no idea. I don't think so. But you know, it's a DIY venue run by people just like you and me, and they don't deserve to have to put up with shit like that. We're gonna be playing tomorrow at the only all ages venue besides Chain Reaction, and I'm sure there's gonna be orange-vest security dudes, and what not. And I'm sure they're gonna be beating people up, and it's just gonna be a fuckin' mess-it's Newport Beach. They deserve shit like what happened tonight to happen to them more than the people here. It's just wrong, man.
Todd: It might happen tomorrow, too. We'll see.
MRR: I guess you kind of answered this already, but why did you start playing in Dystopia?
Todd: I first started playing in Dystopia when my old band, Confrontation, broke up, because of various drug problems, people not getting along, whatever.
Dino: Speed!
Todd: Yeah- it wasn't me with the problem.
Dino: It wasn't because of pot, OK.
Todd: And then, for those guys it was basically a side project at first, and then every-

thing just started falling into place, and it just kinda took over, I guess.

MRR: What countries have you toured? I know you said there were 28, but which ones were they?

Mauz: I don't know if that's accurate.

Dino: Whatever! I'd say around 20, *at least*.

Mauz: All of Europe. Australia, Japan...

MRR: Which ones were the best to tour?

Todd: Different places were awesome for totally different reasons, you know.

MRR: What about Germany? I hear they have pretty good squats over there.

Todd: Yeah, it's pretty amazing. The first time I went out there and saw the way they do shit, I was completely blown away. They'll have a place like this that's just an abandoned building. They'll come in, fix the place up, build a bar, sell beer, and have bands play every weekend and the police don't even worry about it. The neighbors are usually cool with it. They're starting to crack down on shit a little more lately, but it's still going off.

Mauz: What I remember about shows in Germany, is that there weren't just punk rockers there. It was just everyone from the neighborhood. Families, people of different nationalities, it was just a whole different network of people, rather than spiky-haired punk rockers that wanna get fucked up. It was a little more progressive.

Todd: There's nothing wrong with wanting to get fucked up.

Dino: Yeah, out here everyone's trying to tear down everything they build.

MRR: Yeah, there's no respect for clubs or places here.

Dino: Well, it goes further than fucking clubs. Punks don't respect their own scene. I know there's not that many venues around here. And for them to act like that (in reference to the bum rush)- there would need to be 50 fucking venues in this town for people to act like that. If there's only one in town, and you pull that shit, then you're a fucking idiot.

Todd: It'll be nothing but backyard parties again soon.

Dino: Never shit where you eat, you know what I'm saying? It's about survival! (At this point, Dino trips and almost falls). I almost died! (laughter).

Todd: You gotta survive, man.

MRR: So living so far away, is that another reason why you don't play that often?

Todd: It's part of the reason. These guys live in Oakland and I live in Long Beach, so it's a little bit of a drive to band practice.

Dino: It's a little bit of a drive to come down here, pick your ass up, and drive you back, you fuck! Why don't you move to Oakland?

Todd: Because I already pay too much for goddamn rent!

MRR: I actually heard you guys didn't play because Dino broke his collar bone.

Dino: I broke my back. Yeah, that was fucked up. I still have no feeling in the index and thumb of my right hand. It's fucking weird, and I atrophied my arm all the way up. I was down about four or five months.

MRR: I heard collar bone, but back seems a bit worse.

Dino: No, no, no; I heard cancer and AIDS, but that didn't fucking happen.

MRR: What do you guys describe your music as? I've heard it described as electro crust.

Dino: What the-

MRR: I have it on a flyer!

Mauz: I heard of acoustic crust, Seth does acoustic crust.

MRR: Well then what do you consider yourselves?

Todd: Angry, no-.

Mauz: -doom-ridden punk.

Dino: That sounds like Greenday had a bad day. Fuck that.

MRR: Have you gotten in trouble for your use of samples?

Dino: Yeah, actually. You know what? Olivia Newton John used to open one of our songs with "Hopelessly Devoted to You", and they took it off.

Mauz: They pay people at CD pressing plants to listen to everything that comes in for uncleared samples.

Dino: But we slipped a lot through. Bill Murray didn't come after us, and John Candy can't do shit, he's fucking dead. We try to pick people who are dead. They can't come sue. Olivia Newton John, I don't know how the bitch is still alive.

MRR: Why didn't the Wellington split ever come out?

Dino: The Wellington split was a fucking theory. It was never written on paper, OK?

Mauz and Todd: Yeah, it was!

Mauz: We gave 'em the stuff, and he just kinda sat on it and it never happened. It was gonna have one song from the Aftermath 12" on it. Basically, it was recorded in Germany from the guys of Morses and Sistrel, this guy, Dirk. People over there wanted to release the whole recording together so we went ahead and did it.

MRR: When are you gonna get more recordings out there?

Mauz: Um- we have a couple of new songs, but not enough for a full length.

Dino: We're working on a full length. We've never fucking released one, so who fucking knows. We're working on shit now, and we take it one day at a time.

Mauz: Yeah, we've got three and half songs together now-

Dino: Three and a half! You consider the Carcinogen cover a half a song? Fuck you.

MRR: Did you get any shit for the razor blade in the Grief split?

Dino: No, actually-

Mauz: Actually, we did.

Dino: Did we? There we go.

Mauz: Dan from *Profane* took 'em out of all the records because he was afraid of a lawsuit.

Todd: He could have sent 'em back.

Dino: What-fucking-ever. I did big fat lines with mine. But, I digress.

MRR: Who does the tagging for the records?

Dino: No one. I have no idea.

Todd: It's legal to do it on a record.

Dino: Oh, OK, but don't tell them what I write.

MRR: Do different types of people show up to your shows because of it? Like hip hop crews or anything like that?

Dino: Yeah, a little bit. We play urban music man. Underground hip hop. Underground death metal. Underground punk rock. Underground jazz, for that matter. It's all urban music and basically writing graffiti is an urban thing. So it has nothing to do with hip hop or anything like that. It has to do with street life.

Mauz: Street life!

Dino: Don't you fucking fuck with me buddy! You know, it's not conformist. It's artwork. It's expression. It's chaos. It's linear. It's got everything in it so I fucking love it. So we use it for the records.

MRR: Do you do any art besides that?

Mauz: Dino used to do a lot, actually.

Dino: I used to do a lot of artwork but I slowed down to start doing drums more. So now I just play in a whole lot of shitty bands.

MRR: Is your music still as depressing as ever?

Dino: Yeah! We almost didn't play these fucking shows because our lives suck so bad right now. We almost stayed up north because we have a lot of problems. A lot of shit has been happening in our lives. If it keeps going like this I'll be dead. But if it goes a little slower, we'll have some good songs. So, we'll see what happens.

MRR: You guys play a lot of DIY venues, and you seem to be really against war and technology. Would

you say you're anarchists?

Dino: "Ists" are like "isms". I don't even fuck with them. I have a lot of ideas that touch on a lot of other people's ideas. I ain't pigeonholing myself for fucking nobody, because everybody's fucking—you know, someone died thinking the world was flat, and it's not. He's fucking dead and he knew it was flat and its *not.* You never fucking know. So don't discount anything, keep your mind fucking open. Take influences from everywhere.

Don't pigeonhole yourself because you're gonna end up really fucked when you're older. You'll be sitting there going, "Oh, I can't do this because of my views." Views are belief structures, and belief structures are fucking churches. Religions are belief structures. Go be a Christian, then.

I'm 30, and I'm looking at things differently. Not with lenience, but with a little more tolerance and temperance.

Mauz: He still needs a raise, man!

Dino: I still need a fucking raise! Bitch-ass job!

MRR: What do you think of the war that's going on?

Dino: Don't even get me started on that. Basically, Christians were the first terrorists. I hope American soldiers go over there and everything goes OK. I hope that when they come back home, their towns are bombed heavily. Then they can see the dead bodies of *their* wives and children, and all *their* neighbors cooking in the streets. Then they'll have a different fucking theory about their war.

Right now, everyone's really fucking stoked. That's the way America works, man. We've been bombing brown people for fucking years. We're just doing it again. Fuck the war, and fuck the soldiers. Anyone who voluntarily signs up for that shit is a cunt. If you're drafted, OK, that's different, cool. But to say, "Oh I'm gonna go help out." Fuck you! I hope you help out by fucking dying.

Todd: I always said, "If a bunch of people were walking down my street, kicking down doors with guns, I'd be standing behind my door with a 12-gauge waiting for them. But I'm not gonna go to their country.

Dino: Yeah, I'd shoot anybody. I don't give a fuck who they are. I'd shoot whoever comes in my door.

MRR: Is "Diary" a personal song of any of you?

Dino: Yes.

MRR: Do you wanna talk about it?

Dino: Nope. Well, let's put it this way. There are no rules to being a parent. I don't think anyone's to blame because there's no fucking rule book.

Reggie: Hands-on training.

Dino: You never know. So the person beating the shit out of you might actually really believe that he loves you and his actions may be fucked and misdirected. Yeah, there's a lot of personal stuff in there. Fighting with girlfriends fathers who do that, but I won' even go there. Yeah, that's a touchy one.

MRR: Hmm, OK, sorry. Time for random questions. How many times have you guys been arrested, and why?

Dino: Let's not talk about that. (laughter) Todd's got the longest rap sheet. I've been in jail the longest, and Mauz. Well ,Mauz is a pretty good boy.

MRR: What other bands are you in?

Dino: Check out Insidious, Asunder, Nigel Peppercock, Kontraklasse, and Mange.

MRR: Isn't Mange with Phobia dudes?

Dino: I think so, yeah. That's like asking, "Who is Phobia's drummer?"

Mauz: The original guitarist from Phobia is now Phobia's bassist, and is in Mange.

Dino: Don't get started on Phobia. They've had, like, 20 drummers. They're like Spinal Tap. The Spinal Tap of grindcore.

Life is Abuse, PO Box 20524,
Oakland, CA 94620
mauz13@msn.com
www.lifeisabuse.com

Pilger

Having dragged Pilger up from the depths of Southern England to play their very first gig here in the Mighty Boro, NE England, I later got the chance to interview them, here it is :

Interview by Simon Briggs

Tony - drums
Mike-guitar
Phil - vocals
Kev - bass

MRR: Tell me how the band got together.

Tony: When it became obvious that Chokeword weren't going to continue, Mike and I decided to start another band. Phil was interested in singing again and I had recently received a letter from Kev, who had moved to Southampton, and he was looking for a band. Luckily for us, he was a bass player. I called him, he seemed enthusiastic, so we set up a practice and everything went so well, that we wrote five songs straight away.

Mike: Chokeword finished and we still wanted to do a band. Kev was looking to join a band. It was like destiny, it was meant to happen. Jesus planned it that way.

Kev: I had only fairly recently moved to Southampton from Cardiff when I got a telephone call asking if I wanted to play in a band with Tony, Mike, and Phil. When I first moved down, I'd sent a letter to Suspect Device asking about where the best venues for gigs were in Southampton. Tony replied, filling me in on upcoming gigs. I can't remember what the first gig I went to in Southampton was, but I know it was at the Joiners. I picked on Gaz Suspect first, thinking he was Tony. But he pointed me in the right direction, to a smiley skinhead guy hiding behind a mountain of fanzines and CDs on a small table, "That's Tony." I introduced myself and let Tony know that I was looking for a band, a few months later I got that telephone call. Those months in-between involved lots of fruitless replying to stupid adverts in newspapers and music shops, having conversations with people desperately trying to find some kind of common musical ground. I soon realized that humor, attitude, and a decent record collection count for so much more than any kind of musical virtuosity. Initially, I think I was too keen on hooking up with other "musicians." I soon realized what a waste of time that can be if they're too obsessed with being the next plot line on a sales graph.

MRR: Most of you guys are a bit older, and some have families, how does this affect the band?

Tony: Well, Mike and I are married and have kids, while Kev is a few years younger and lives with his girlfriend, Phil is the baby, he's only 21, he lives in a house full of punks. Our families are pretty understanding, obviously I can't speak for the others, but so far we haven't done too much to annoy my family, I'm not sure how things would be if we got a tour sorted out, we'll have to cross that bridge when we come to it. In saying that, the problem wouldn't be so much that my wife wouldn't want me to go, it would be more that I would miss home and my daughter, because I'm a big softy.

Mike: It can be difficult, but you have to make sacrifices for punk rock, most of the time we manage.

Kev: I sometimes get the idea that the responsibilities that Tony, Mike, and I have impinges on Phil's enthusiasm for playing every gig that presents itself. What do you reckon Phil?

Phil: I don't think that being in a band with older people has really presented any problems so far; we've managed to balance commitments and play most of the shows we've been offered. Personally, I think its kind of cool that there's such a wide age range within the band, it demonstrates that punk rock isn't necessarily something that you grow out of.

MRR: The lyrics on the demo are politically oriented, is this important to all of you? Does Phil, the singer, write all the lyrics? Do you all have similar leanings politically?

Tony: Yes, it is important to us. When we started this band, and took the name we did, we said we wanted political lyrics. Phil has written all the lyrics so far, and they are really great, so I don't see why he should stop now. I would say we all have the same political leanings. Phil always shows us the lyrics, so the opportunity is there to speak out if one of us didn't like what he's written, and that hasn't happened yet.

Mike: I can only speak for myself, but as we have all read the lyrics, I guess we all agree. Phil writes all the lyrics, he hasn't learned to rhyme yet, but he does okay. Politics, punk, and life seem inextricably linked to me, the lyrics have to reflect that.

Kev: I suppose I share the general sentiments that Phil expresses, but for me, it's the music that I enjoy most. I've dabbled briefly with writing lyrics, but it doesn't really interest me to be honest. In terms of political leanings, I suppose it's left of center, as you'd expect. I'm no great anarchist or activist. I try to operate on a personal political level in my daily life for the things I believe to be right.

Phil: It was important for me to write political lyrics, because as Mike said, politics and punk are closely linked. I guess that I wanted my words to maybe make people think about how they interpret the world around them, in the same way as 7 Seconds, Nations on Fire, Dead Stool Pigeon and numerous other bands made me. I don't necessarily think that my lyrics are good enough to do that, but that was the goal. I think maybe the world has enough songs about broken hearts and being stabbed in the back!

MRR: What keeps you motivated to stay involved in the Punk Rock scene?

Tony: Great music and cool people. Punk rock to me is an alternative to the mainstream, a different outlook from that presented by the press and the capitalist system; a system I feel is so unjust and unfair, yet one I am living in. Punk rock is part of who I am; it inspires me and has helped me see things a little more clearly, to see the bigger picture and not take things on face value. Also, I have, over the years, made a lot of great friends directly through punk rock. Without the common bond of punk, would I have met and become friends with people at the opposite end of the country, or in a different country? Would I have become friends with the rest of Pilger? It's doubtful. Plus, through punk rock, a talentless person like me can write a zine, play in a band, release records, write and publish a book and so on. Punk rock gives you the power to do anything you want, it doesn't put up barriers with big stop signs on them. That's what keeps me motivated.

Mike: Punk rock is just so great, the bands, the music, the people, the zines, DIY, the latest Dag Nasty CD, the Pitch Black CD, Imbalance, Minor Threat, Kid Dynamite, hey, I could go on for hours, I love punk music, love it! True 'til death, which is getting closer everyday, cheery soul.

Kev: The music mostly. And meeting people who share a healthy enthusiasm for truly independent music. Also, fanzines and bands can be an invaluable source of information on various political topics that may not be so available in mainstream media. Like I said before, I'm no kind of activist, but I like to feel informed.

Phil: I continue to stay involved in hardcore primarily because I love the music, the political ideas and the fact that someone with very little musical ability such as myself can play in three bands and travel all over the country. That just seems awesome to me.

MRR: Why the name Pilger?

Kev: Ask Tony and Mike.

Tony: Mike introduced me to the books of John Pilger, the investigative journalist and filmmaker.

His books had a pretty big effect on me. They made me angry, made me sad, and made me want to actually do something, rather than just watching the news and shaking my head at the hopelessness of it all. When we were talking about doing another band, taking his name went along with the sort of lyrics we wanted the band to have. It's a better name, I think, than something like The Snot Gobblers.

Mike: He's a good bloke with good views, a humanist, seemed appropriate to what we wanted to say, what we hope to achieve.

MRR: What are your influences both musically and otherwise?

Tony: Punk Rock. Musically, we all like punk rock, although a list of our favorite bands wouldn't be identical. Personally, I get excited by bands like Kid Dynamite, Minor Threat and 7 Seconds, but they are just the ones that inspired me to want to play music again, they wouldn't necessarily be the ones that make the other three want to be in Pilger. The whole DIY ethic inspires me to want to do as much as we can ourselves, and the way Fugazi and Dischord handle themselves is the way I would like to see us handle our affairs, on a smaller scale obviously. But they have proved that you can stay true to the beliefs you had when you started, even if some form of success does come your way. We're a totally different sounding band than Fugazi, but in terms of the things we think are important, I don't think we're that far removed.

Mike: Punk Rock, conspiracy theories, paranoia, cider and did I mention punk rock?

Kev: Musically, I suppose I come from the more "arty" side of punk rock. Bands like NoMeansNo, Fugazi, Shellac, Jesus Lizard, early Melvins and the Minutemen are essential as far as I'm concerned, and have definitely shaped my bass playing abilities. I don't know whether people consider those bands "punk" or not anymore, probably not! The criteria seem pretty strict these days! Bands like Leatherface, Urko, Minor Threat, Snuff, Nirvana, the Hellacopters, the Swarm, Rancid and Husker Du have all contributed to my tinnitus at some point. Sometimes I get told off by the lads for listening to too much AC/DC. Funnily enough, our music keeps getting compared to 7 Seconds, who are a band that I just can't get into at all. Maybe I haven't heard their best stuff.

Phil: My musical influences are mostly youth crew bands like 7 Seconds, Turning Point, Chain Of Strength, Uniform Choice, and No For An Answer, although that's not all I listen to! Outside of punk, I get my influences mostly from the people around me, from conversations with workmates and other students, and from the things I read. I am working on a history degree, and I'm lucky enough to have covered some interesting periods and events, such as the Spanish Civil War.

MRR: You have done quite a few gigs just on the back of a demo, how is this? How have you been going down live considering pretty much no one has heard you?

Mike: We seem to be going down well, a few people have admitted to be blown away by what we are doing. The demo has gone down really well, which is nice, and we are really pleased with how the band is going. Whilst we play punk, which is firmly influenced by US hardcore from the early 80s, not many others seem to be doing that these days. But it's great music and we love playing it!

Tony: We have gotten gigs because we have a lot of friends up and down the country. You got us our first gig without ever hearing us, but because you know us, we were able to play our first gig 300 miles from home with some really great bands. Our third gig was over 100 miles from home, and again was because we had got to know Dan who set the gig up, again with some really cool bands. Of course, Mike and I have been around the Southampton scene for a long time, and Phil is mates with people who put on gigs, so it's not really hard to get gigs in Southampton. The reactions have been really good and most people have been pretty positive about us. We got a review for our first Southampton gig, it said something like "I missed half of Pilger's set and only saw the last ten minutes." We were like, "That was it, you saw the whole set!"

Kev: Actually, I'm not sure that that many of our gigs have been on the back of the demo. I think it's been more down to the contacts that the four of us have. Okay, so Tony and Mike have been around since the fucking punk Bronze Age and have pretty much every corner of the UK covered in terms of gig contacts. But Phil and I have done our bit too! Live, I don't think people come to see us particularly, we happen to be a supporting band playing that night. People clap politely; we get a few enquiries from the curious. I think we're still working at establishing ourselves and our group sense of confidence.

MRR: Do you have any plans to release anything else in the near future?

Mike: Hopefully we will get a CD out soon, possibly self-released, if we can get the money together. I'm waiting for a bonus from work. If anyone is interested, we have a ton of material we could release. Go on, you know you want to.

Tony: As Mike said, we want to get some of our songs out and I would really like for us to be able to afford to put it out ourselves. We plan to record again soon and although it would be cool if someone came along who likes us enough to want to put our stuff out, I would prefer us to be releasing our own stuff. I guess it all comes down to money at the end of the day, so we'll just have to see how it goes.

Kev: We're talking about going back to the studio to record stuff in September, but our finances may have other ideas. It would be great to get more stuff out there though.

MRR: What do you think of the current state of punk/hardcore in the UK?

Mike: Damn, I love punk/hardcore and good bands seem to pop up all the time, its great to see so many different types of band doing well, even if some stuff is watered down mainstream corporate crap. It still breathes life into punk rock. It's great that I can still be into punk rock all these years down the line, its great that the likes of Green Day and All once slept on my floor, its great that Fugazi, Dag Nasty, and MDC are still going. It's nice to get mail from bands, punks who are anything from fourteen to forty. The punk scene is tops, how else do explain four punks from Southampton being able to travel the length of the country to play six minutes in Middlesbrough, trash local punk god Si's family car and still live to tell the tale. Punk rock is great!

Tony: I think that the current state of punk in the UK is pretty good. There are a lot of good people doing good things. There are some good zines, some great bands and some cool gig collectives. I like what the people behind Reason To Believe are doing, Fracture is becoming the zine it always promised to be, and the last couple of issues have been really great. I like what the Just One Life people are doing in Brighton, the STE, Oomf and others are doing in Southampton, the people who put on gigs at the 1 in 12, Open Season in Middlesbrough. There's gigs happening now in smaller places, and there are some great bands and cool labels around. I just wish that some of the kids who come to see the bigger bands would also support the smaller gigs, get more of a community feel back, rather then there being us oldies trying to do things independently and then the kids coming in who are quite happy to buy stuff in the chain stores, and don't seem to care too much about creating something for themselves. I guess it's up to us to keep at it, to keep providing the alternatives and to make sure that they get to know that they can buy the new Rancid/NOFX split CD from a stall for half the price. I also wish these kids would do their own fanzines instead of relying on Kerrang and mainstream crap like that.

Kev: I don't know really. Musically, good UK bands come and go, disappear and re-emerge. I like the variety of UK stuff that's around at the moment. A flexible state of bands and venues keeps things interesting. Fracture and Reason to Believe fanzines operate as good core reference points at the moment. Like any group focus, members of "the scene" reflect a cross-section of characters, personalities and attitudes. I involve myself with people I think are fun or interesting to be with and try to avoid people I consider petty, self-righteous or arrogant.

Phil: I think that the UK scene seems to be pretty healthy at the moment; at least locally, there's enough people active in bands and in promoting gigs for there to be something going on at least once every fortnight or so I think it's probably the most active things have been, since I first started going to shows. Local bands like diSOMA and Disposable Heroes are definitely worth checking out, as is Horror 81 fanzine, and Tony's zine, Suspect Device, which is a bit of an institution. From what I can tell, I think Southampton's probably representative of the UK as a whole; I've seen some great bands recently like Stand, Sworn In, Steel Rules Die and Fig. 4.0.

MRR: Anything to add?

Kev: Milk to cornflakes? Salt to chips? Two to two? You tell me.

Mike: When do we next play Boro?

Phil: Cheers.

Tony: Just thanks to you for liking us enough to do this, and for trusting us enough to get us that first gig. Thanks to everyone who's given us a gig, said nice things about us, cared enough to ask for a demo (just send us postage and you can have one too), or sung along with Phil at one of our gigs. Also, thanks to our families for making Pilger so easy to do. I'm having the best time in this band, and I really feel good about what we're doing, and it's a real bonus that other people are into it as well. If you want to contact us, please enclose some kind of return payment, because we're not rich people.

Pilger, c/o Suspect Device, PO Box 295,
Southampton, SO17 1LW, UK
pilgerpunk@hotmail.com

EXOTIC FEVER

After traveling a few times to the US in the last few years, I've come to the conclusion that the punk scene there has become way too trendy and apathetical, people seem more into "rocking out" than creating new things and being active beyond music. I think a good part of the scene has been going downhill mostly because a lot of bands are signing to major or larger indie labels with corporate policies, lame artist management companies and creepy marketing schemes. There are a few folks though that keep the "punk idea" of being original and creative, and even "artsy," alive without leaving aside their ideas and aspirations of a more free and just society, backed by an honest practice of those ideas. Exotic Fever is a DIY label from Washington, DC that releases mostly active and socially conscious artists. It's not your run of the mill indie punk label, this one is run by women and is committed to not just making noise, but also creating a sense of community and keeping their ethics true, in spite of their little success through record sales. Coming from a town with great influences like Positive Force, Dischord Records and the Riot Grrrl movement of the 90s, this label is bound to pass into history as one of the few indies that had something meaningful to say, in the tradition of the older 80s political punk scene. In the midst of the overwhelming trendiness and superficiality of the contemporary indie punk scene, Exotic Fever is an example to be followed. So pay attention to the following words, and learn something.

Interview by Joao Da Silva

MRR: How many people work at Exotic Fever? I though it was just you and wondered how you can juggle your time between a steady job, the band, and the label.

Katy Otto: There are actually five people that work on the label in different capacities. Tony is our Webmaster, Hank is our wonderful intern, Sara does the media/zine stuff as well as distribution, and Bonnie was the founder, who also put the Vietnam Vets comp together. She is part of general label decision-making, as are Sara and I.

MRR: Wasn't Hank an intern with Amor y Lucha also?

Katy: Yes, Hank interns for both labels. I do radio, mailorder and direct sales, in addition, to general label management and bookkeeping.

MRR: Do you have any free time left after the job, band, and label?

Katy: I am actually a pretty busy woman, but I try to always make enough time to read. I love reading, so that is a priority to me.

MRR: What are your criteria for releasing a record?

Katy: I have to be moved by an artist in order to release a record by them. Sara, Bonnie, and I all collectively decide upon whom we are going to release. We also look for artists that share our focus in art as a community development tool. We need to know that artists are inspiring people as well as inspiring musicians. Right now, we have an amazing roster 1905, Light the Fuse and Run, Andrea Lisi, Homage to Catalonia, and Kathy Cashel. Soon, we will be releasing a split 7" with the Assistant and Circle Takes the Square, we also have an OutCircuit 7" as well as a Respira 7" lined up.

MRR: Although you guys have a lot of releases and do a pretty large run of each record, you're still pretty low-key on a larger scale? Would you ever feel comfortable being a bigger indie like Jade Tree, Polyvinyl, or even Dischord?

Katy: I think we all definitely have a goal of being a larger scale indie label, but only if we can maintain our ethics and values. It is very important to us that we are a label run by three women. Men help us at our label, but women make the executive decisions. We think that gives us a different perspective and a different approach. We always want to follow our hearts, passions and politics not dollars.

MRR: One thing I noticed about the DIY scene over there was the really big percentage of women participating, especially in DC, you don't see that in most places. Would you say that these are the good effects, the "riot grrrl" movement had back in the 90s? Hardcore and punk before that were so macho and male oriented.

Katy: I think DC is a unique place in that respect. I have toured, and know that sometimes as a woman in punk, who is active, engaged, and invested, you are sometimes viewed as an anomaly. I like being a part of the DC punk community, because there are *numerous* women engaged in every aspect of the punk community, whether it's playing in bands, setting up shows, writing zines, running labels, or doing activist work. There is a real feminist punk community that I find invaluable, which is why I think our Ladyfest DC was such a success this past summer.

MRR: Why do you think it takes place in DC, and not so much elsewhere?

Katy: I think this city was the home of Riot Grrrl, and I also think this city is the birthplace of DIY culture in a lot of respects. I think DIY culture has an inherent appeal to feminist women who are sick and tired of being spoonfed the same ridiculous images of what it means to be a woman and what our reality is by corporate media and others.

MRR: I heard something about Ebullition not wanting to carry the 1905 CD? Is this true, why was that, and what came of it?

Katy: Ebullition initially made some good points about how the 1905 CD says "Pay no more than $10" which is not fair, considering it has to go through several channels to get through a store, and will be more like $11.99 or $12.99 once it gets there. It was a problem of semantics and Exotic Fever learned some lessons from it. Ebullition is now carrying the CD again.

MRR: Our scene in South America is very male oriented, what would you say to men and women reading this that could help or inspire to change that?

Katy: For men, all you need to do is start listening to your female friends more, support them, watch their shows, listen to their records, let them practice on your instruments/in your practice space, don't give input unless it is solicited. Women, form a network of other supportive and creative women to provide encouragement for your projects be there for one another, give yourself space and time in your life to devote to your creations.

MRR: What are your top five songs for this week?

Katy: Sleater-Kinney *One Beat,* Against Me *Reinventing Axl Rose*, Tori Amos *A Sorta Fairytale,* Sarah McLachlan *Plenty,* and 1905 *Fall*

MRR: OK, that will be all, thank you so very much, any final words?

Katy: I really hope that Exotic Fever can become a place where people all over can exchange ideas and meet to work on projects. Thanks for doing this Joao.

http://www.exoticfever.com

BREZHNEV

ALL HAIL THE MIGHTY FUCKN BREZHNEV… BUTT ROCKING PUNK FROM AMSTERDAM, PLAYED BY A BUNCH OF DIRT-BAGS WHO REALLY KNOW HOW TO KICK UP A STINK. I'VE BEEN BLASTED TO SMITHEREENS BY THE 'NEV ON PLENTY AN OCCASION, AND FELT COMPELLED… DAMMIT – OBLIGED PEOPLE, OBLIGED…TO SPREAD THE WORD ON THESE LUNATICS TO PARTS NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST. TO CONTINENTS FAR AND WIDE, WHERE THEIR REPUTATION HAS YET TO MAKE A DENT. A WISE MAN ONCE NOTED, "WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW, WON'T HARM YOU" SERIOUSLY, WHERE'S THE FUCKN FUN IN THAT! YOUR ATTENTION IS UNDULY APPRECIATED.

—PETE ZONKED, BRIGHTON

I DON'T WRITE LYRICS WITH DEEP HIDDEN MEANINGS, I MEAN IT'S PUNK ROCK INIT? PEOPLE WANNA BE HIT OVER THE HEAD WITH IT THEY WANNA BE ABLE TO SCREAM OUT THE CHORUS WHILE HANGING UP SIDE DOWN IN THE PIT.

-DOGSHIT

MRR: BREZHNEV has been around for some time, but how did the current line-up get together? Give us some of good ole lineage!

Dogshit (vocals): This is without a doubt the best line up we've ever had. I've been in the band for 6 of the 14 years BREZHNEV has been around and since Jevin came in on guitar a couple of years ago things have been going really well and we can basically play as much as we can afford at the moment. Jevin (guitar): Yeah, they begged me to save this band in turmoil, I thought ok, since you've struggled for 14 years it's time for success, haha! No, it was a done deal - do the tour, make the record. Done. But we all know how it goes…three years later.

Oeb (drums): Yeah right! You just kept showing up at band practise!

Dogshit: We seem to have finally reached a point where we've made a lot of cool friends around Euroland who wanna help out with tours and stuff which is really great especially if you've been slugging it out from the beginning like Oeb and Frank (bass).

MRR: There was a huge time gap between the *North America Sucks* album, and your latest *www.bullshit/control*—what took you so long?

Dogshit: It took way too long but we went through a bit of a bad patch where we had a couple of guitar players who didn't work out, so we'd be playing a new guy in which can take forever if he's a drunk of a dickhead or whatever and just when you reach the point where you think your head will explode if you have to practise the set one more time the new guy gets kicked out and you start all over again. We very nearly gave up a couple of times. After we gave the last guy the boot and we only had 2 weeks before a Germany tour with the Bloody Sods we asked Jevin if he'd save our asses and do the tour. We had a great time, touring through Germany with that bunch of rednecks from Atlanta Georgia was hilarious and the Sods are one of the most intense live bands I've ever seen as well as drinking the whole lot of us under the table. Anyway Bill and Shannon from the Sods started D-Fens Records and we scooped on the chance to be their first release.

MRR: What's the underlying message behind the title of *www.bullshit/control*?

Dogshit: The message in the title track is pretty self-explanatory… it's right there in the lyrics: technology sucks, so why is everybody buying it? I don't write lyrics with deep hidden meanings, I mean it's punk rock init? People wanna be hit over the head with it; they wanna be able to scream out the chorus while hanging up side down in the pit. I've tried writing lyrics that need to be deciphered or just sound cool but it didn't really work out…I'm sticking to the 'what you see is what you get' method. The title track www.bullshit/control laments the way everybody buys in to the technology scam…I mean we don't need computers and the fucking internet. Way better things than what's going on now in the computer ages were created without the help of a computer and a cell-phone. We're dead inside and use all these fucking gadgets that we buy from corporate fascists to relieve the boredom. Do we really need portable inter-inactive T.V.? Cause that's where we're going. Groan.

MRR: The song "Disappeared"—that's about the daughter of a former South

American dictator who married into the Dutch Royal family, right?

Dogshit: Yeah the Dutch Royal Family has a nasty habit of marrying into well-established fascist families. The latest episode in the saga saw the Crown Prince marrying some bimbo whose daddy was on the Junta in Argentina in the seventies during which 30,000 people disappeared. I don't know that you can blame people for what their parents did but nobody in the royals ever condemned what happen and some of the even denied it so that kinda pissed a lot of people of here.

MRR: Wasn't there a big street demo in Amsterdam on the day of their wedding?

Dogshit: Yeah quite a big one too with loads of speakers and shit with us being the token punk band…it was fun.

Jevin: Hey, it was grand, we had to wake up at like 9:30am, play five songs and be told we were offensive to the Dutch Royal Family, I didn't understand why, but we were on the news as far away as Krautland and that's always fun. Another victory notch on the belt which is the Mighty 'Nev!

Oeb: Imagine how offensive they would have found us if you'd managed to keep your guitar plugged in.

Jevin: Dude, it was very early in the day.

Dogshit: Typical though isn't it how royals can't just get married at their local church or city hall, they always have to come to your town and "clean" it up and seal off the whole downtown and than complain that "the people" should mind their own business when we demonstrate.

MRR: Amsterdam had some reputation years ago for its squatted houses and venues. What's the situation now—do many of these places still in existence?

Dogshit: Pretty dire really…as far as squats go it's really thin on the ground. All the old squats are either evicted or legalised which in itself isn't really a bad thing cause it gets a bit frustrating building a bar or venue up in a squat and than being evicted but I miss the edge that the old places had. One of the old legalized squats that's still a great venue to see a band in is the OCCii, which has a great atmosphere and is kept going by some really cool people.

MRR: Half the band is originally from North America. What are some observations you can give us on the differences between Dutch society, and the one you left behind in North America? Would you return to live over there?

Jevin: I'm from California, San Jose born and raised all around the Bay area from Santa Cruz to San Francisco. But most of my days were in Los Gatos, home of the Doobie Brothers and the Hells Angels…can you dig it?

Dogshit: That explains a lot…I'm from Vancouver, Canada where we hate fuckin' Yanks who run around like hog riding Doobie's.

Jevin: Whatever, I figure myself as one of the fortunate ones, I got to choose, you know, but I don't think I could go back, maybe I'd move to like Arizona or New Mexico, raise donkeys and sell odd pottery around town, nah. I think I'll stick around here for a while and milk it dry – haha! Things are starting to move in a good way, ya know, not a lotta money in it, but I'm keeping plenty busy juggling three bands.

Dogshit: I don't really know what it's like in Vancouver these days… I left in 1986 and have only been back for a week in the last 6 years. What I hear from the few people I still know there is that it's gone down the tubes in the last 10 years and the only time you hear from Vancouver in the news it's about the masses of homeless and the largest HIV infected junkie population in North America so that doesn't sound too promising. Over there when your down your out and you can forget getting any help from the government whereas here in Holland there is still a great social safety-net and a pretty liberal outlook though that seems to be changing a bit. As great as Amsterdam is though I get pretty fucked off with these Dutch people a lot of the time, they can be real stiff and Calvinist ya know?

MRR: To the outside world, Amsterdam, and the Netherlands in general, has a reputation for being a super liberal society. But then in early 2002 a Right Wing politician got killed, and suddenly it didn't seem like such a tolerant nation. Is the Right Wing a force to be reckoned with in Dutch Politics at present?

Oeb: I don't support killing other people for their beliefs, but honestly, I think this was not a bad thing that happened, this guy would have made a mess in Holland, he was too smart and had a lot of followers. Since that guy, Pim Fortuyn, is dead we will never know what would have happened, so the guy who shoot him could be a hero who saved the country or he could be a shooting maniac…for now I'll stick with the first.

Dogshit: The whole right-wing mania has been building up for a while now, helped by a media hype, ever since the whole Corporate Euro-thing really started taking over. The way the media, right wing and populist politicians have been milking the immigration card is scandalous. But I think what's mainly happening is that the Dutch are starting to realise that they're not really as tolerant and reasonable as they've been imagining themselves to be and really they can be as mean and narrow minded as the rest of Europe when it comes to turning back refugees and dropping bombs for Uncle Sam.

MRR: We've talked in the past about the song "Suicide Suit" (on the *North America Sucks* album) and it's bleak reference to the conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians. Well, it's still happening, the retribution from both sides continues. Can you see ANY hope for peace in this hot spot —what's it gonna take? You did made an interesting, albeit tongue-in-cheek, on-stage comment (when I saw BREZHNEV in Amsterdam a few months ago) before playing "Suicide Suit," about bringing the "Jews home" (to Europe) as a resolution.

Dogshit: Shit, I didn't realize anybody ever really listened to any of my between song rants. It sucks though doesn't it, that a 6year old song like 'Suicide Suit' is still relevant. I guess as long as America is propping up the Israelis they're gonna keep on shooting the Palestinians. The "Dogshit Peace Plan" of inviting the Israelis back to Europe is meant in a tongue-in-cheek kinda way, but there is a bit of seriousness behind it. If Europe hadn't made the Jews feel so unwelcome here through a thousand years of discrimination and than given them the go ahead to steal Palestinian land after the holocaust none of this would be happening now. Sounds crazy eh…reclaiming our lost Europeans from their exile in the Middle East but I reckon the Palestinians are sick to death of paying for European anti-Semitism and Holocaust guilt. By the way I'm also for repatriating all the Yanks and Canucks to their European mother countries and giving back North America to the Natives… imagine that!

MRR: You recently went on tour in France, how did the BREZHNEV set go down with the local punters?

Dogshit: France was fucking great! And I was really ready to have a shitty time. I've never been a big fan of the French people and I'd heard other bands bitch about touring in France but we only met really good people and had a great time, so all thanks to Matt and the Too-Loose Crew!

Jevin: They lapped it up… well that's how I saw it, especially considering we'd never played a note there before. I thought the whole thing went over pretty kickass. Also considering the set-up, like a few squats here, some class act type joints there and than the whole wide range thing, which I consider the middle. It was great all around "Vulva La France".

MRR: And what about Switzerland…the land of milk and honey (and millions of dollars of "missing" money stashed in secret bank accounts)—good gigs there too?

Oeb: Hahahahahahahahahahahahahahah

Dogshit: That's an insane laugh you're hearing there, Oeb's still suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome from the Swiss leg.

Jevin: I got no fucking comment to make.

Dogshit: Don't know what happened when we got to Switzerland, but things started going wrong and though people did their best trying to fix shit it was a bit of a bummer after France. Switzerland is another one of those weird countries that's really 3 or 4 separate parts and can be completely different depending on where about you are. A few years back we were there and had a great time so what the fuck.

MRR: Not many bands from Mainland Europe tour the UK as often as you guys—what is it now, three or four times?

Dogshit: I don't know myself why, but BREZHNEV and the UK just seem to go together. We've yet to make any money over there but we've made loads of friends and had a great time every time we go over.

Jevin: I don't care what anyone says I like touring in England. True some things could be improved over there like the opening times, the production of hot woman, prices on cigarettes, the weather, well the weather's an on/off one cause last tour the skies were nice and blue most of the time…I even saw a real live "crop circle" and we saw lamas and some glider dude fall to his death… well I think he's dead, he just kinda dropped from his towline, no chute opened and he disappeared behind some real low bushes.

Dogshit: I know how he must have felt though having done a whole U.K. tour with a junkie driving us who seemed hell bent on almost killing us 8 times a day. But even that asshole couldn't ruin a U.K. tour. We played every show on that tour like it was our last! Last years' tour was even better cause we finally got our asses up to Scotland and those crazy fuckers didn't disappoint us! Those Scots poured it on every night!

Jevin: Our good Island-Ape Paulie "Jellybrain" Fletcher fixed it all up for us, he's our personal Go-Getter-Guy and I wanna say "thanx o' mill" Pauly Paul Paul and the Paul Paul's, you're ok with me, much luv dude.

Oeb: We always seem to have a blast and we're gonna keep coming over every year no matter what.

Dogshit: Most touring bands we meet are always whining about the U.K. cause the food sucks or it doesn't stop raining or they're losing money…I love the look on their faces when we tell them we do three weeks in the U.K every year cause the Brit-punks know how to fuckin' party!

MRR: On your tours of the UK we've seen you (Dogshit) dressed as a Gladiator, Gorilla and most recently Ronald McDonald. Is there a theme here, a common thread… something that I've missed?

Dogshit: The central theme in the shticks is simply… well it's fun! I get a laugh outta whacking people's drinks into their laps with my plastic roman sword or jumping on their table in a full-on gorilla suit, it's a laugh. And people don't notice that you can't sing worth shit when you're chasing 'em about with a chainsaw ya know? But of all the shticks I've done Ronald McDonald was the only one that seem to really worry people though, some people seemed to be just fuckin' scared of him! But really it's just about entertainment…having a laugh ya know.

MRR: A lot of bands pass through Amsterdam on tours of Europe—who're some of the best you seen in the past few months?

Dogshit: It's been pretty slim pickings lately though I did miss a couple good ones like Motorhead and Sin Dios through pure laziness. The best band I did make it to the last couple months has gotta be Flogging Molly…really rockin'.

Jevin: I saw the Columbian Neckties earlier this year, those guys are great, fucking rockin', Oppressed Logic was very humorous - "The Beans on my Tortilla went Flat", thanx for the laughs, Danko Jones was pretty cool too.

Oeb: Motorhead, Suicidal, MDC, we're all great, but really I think it's been slow for good bands touring through town.

MRR: And what about local bands you would be happy to endorse in the pages of *MRR*?

Dogshit: All the bands in Amsterdam suck except maybe VITAMIN X, though now that they're huge "over there" it won't be long before they suck too.

MRR: What about outside BREZHNEV, are any of you involved in other bands, record labels, or interesting shit that the readers of *MRR* might like to know about?

Jevin: Tell 'em about the Nitwitz Mike…explain that one.

Dogshit: That cult of bad luck and poor taste whose members pay their homage to a Slugs scrotum? My near indoctrination and deprogramming are still too painful to recollect here.

Jevin: I've got another band called THE FELCHERS, not to be confused with the good band of that name. We think it's great and you may too so look out for the CD *God is Sound presents…The Felchers* on Dead Teenager Records sometime soon and check the website at www.godissound.com and enjoy.

Oeb: I do a label called Madskull Records and play in the sensational SATAN'S SLUTS. Check out the site at www.madskullrecords.com.

Dogshit: I sit at home and plan my escape.

Jevin: I think Mike works a lot on his solo project while we all have real bands

MRR: Anything else you like to add then feel to stick it down.

Jevin: I think *Maximum* readers could really dig on some info about "The MC Dogshit Experience…Lost in my Sobriety" … Mike will fill you in on all the juicy details and I won't be involved to save this one, indulge in its brilliance.

Dogshit: Dude, I think you've indulged enough already…hey I'll trade you a kidney for a CD's worth of songs. Okay Peter, thanks a lot for doing us an interview and hopefully we'll be back in the U.K. in the springtime.

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http://www.xs4all.nl/~fmotor/BREZHNEV

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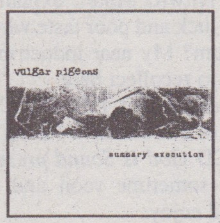
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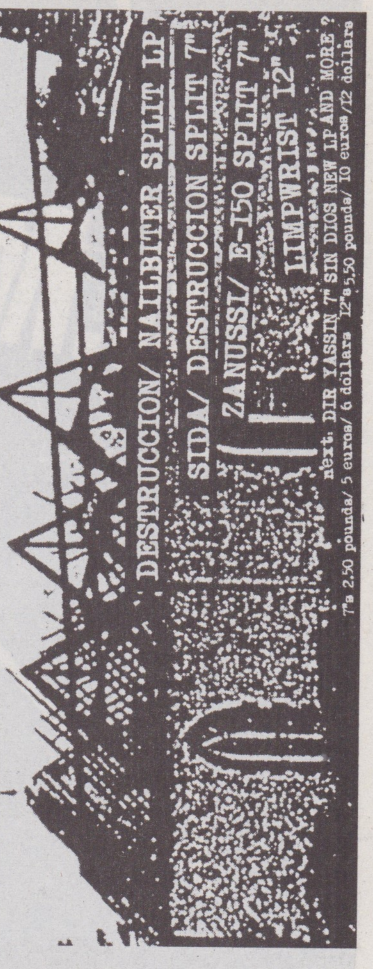

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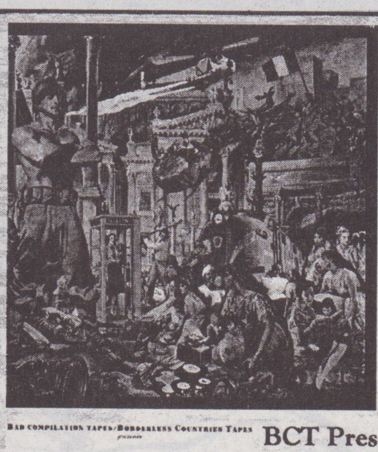

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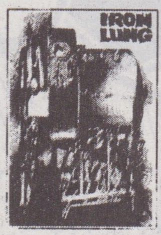

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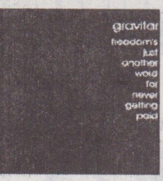

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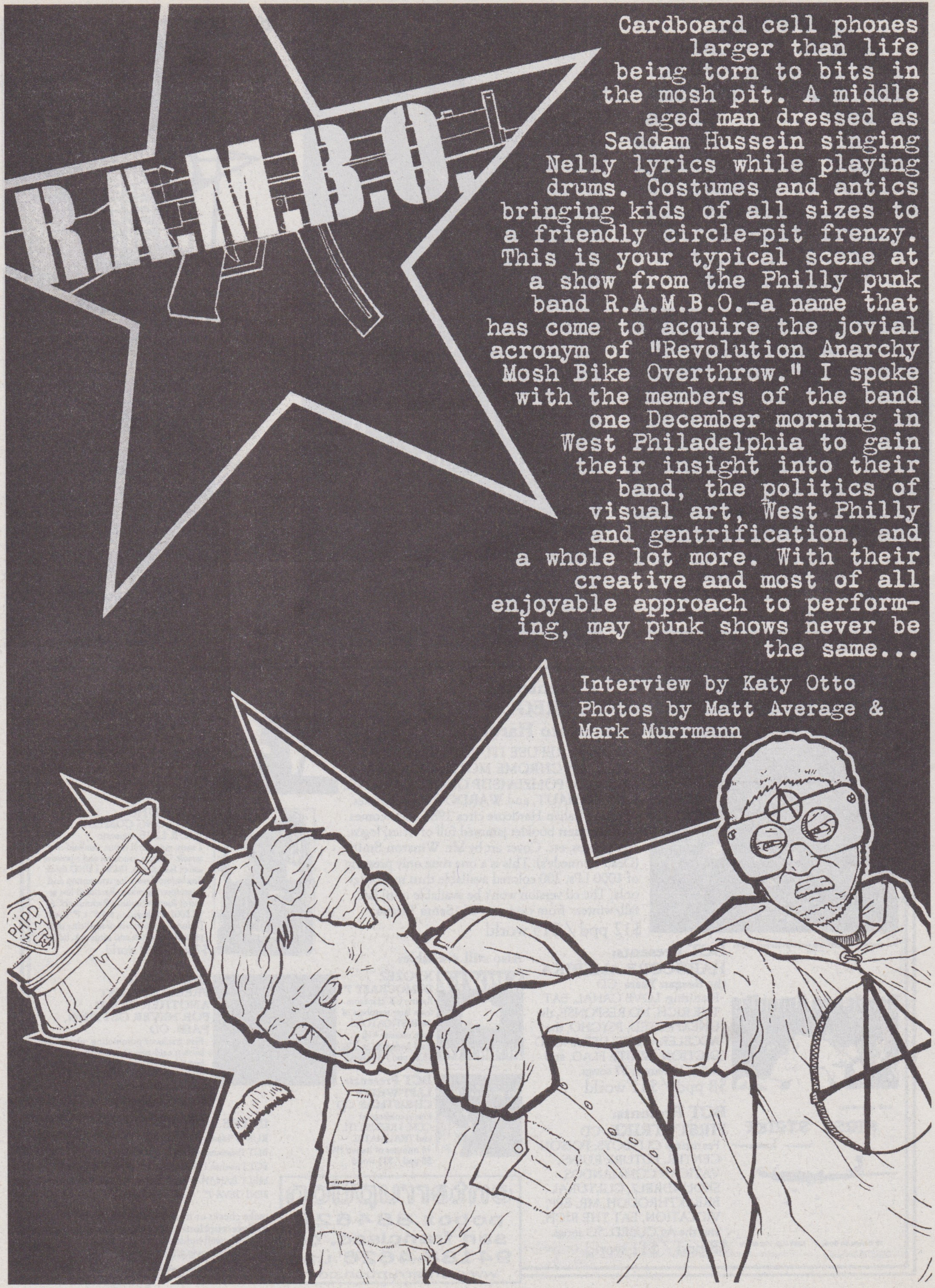
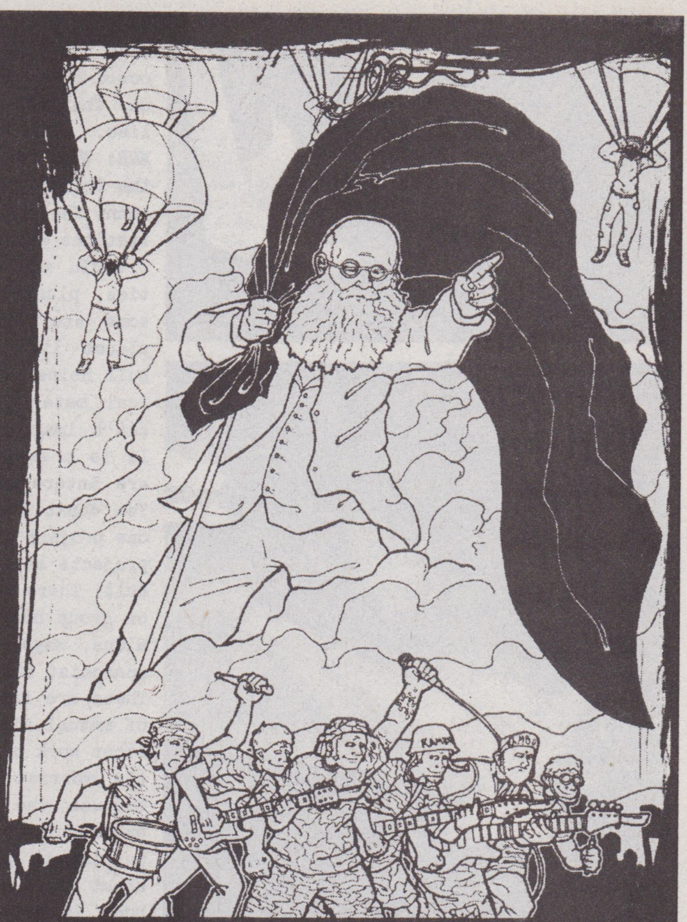


Cardboard cell phones larger than life being torn to bits in the mosh pit. A middle aged man dressed as Saddam Hussein singing Nelly lyrics while playing drums. Costumes and antics bringing kids of all sizes to a friendly circle-pit frenzy. This is your typical scene at a show from the Philly punk band R.A.M.B.O.-a name that has come to acquire the jovial acronym of "Revolution Anarchy Mosh Bike Overthrow." I spoke with the members of the band one December morning in West Philadelphia to gain their insight into their band, the politics of visual art, West Philly and gentrification, and a whole lot more. With their creative and most of all enjoyable approach to performing, may punk shows never be the same...

Interview by Katy Otto
Photos by Matt Average &
Mark Murrmann



CIRCLE THAT Ⓐ MOTHERFUCKER!

MRR: Could each of you introduce yourselves and explain your role in the band?

John: I'm John Robinson and I play guitar. We all do a lot of stuff for the band. We're all trying to get ready for our European tour. Mike Bukowski isn't here yet, but he does all our artwork, and visual props.

Tony: And he participates live in theatrics and sings on a song. I'm Tony Pointless and I sing for RAMBO and write the lyrics.

Bull: I'm Bull. I play the bass sometimes. That's about it.

Tony: He helps with nutrition on tour. When we are on tour and say "I have $4.38," he helps me create the most complete meal possible!

Bull: I'm the resident homoeopath and naturepath.

John: Sociopath.

Tony: He has a satchel full of goodness.

Bull: In my beard!

John: Todd is missing, and he plays drums. He is the organizer. He contacts a lot of people that we need to contact. He is very on the ball. Andy is not here and he plays guitar and cooks for us.

MRR: Hott!

John: He's also a road dogg. He loves to drive and is a driving machine on tour. I hate to drive. That is my role.

MRR: How did RAMBO come about, and what was the impetus?

Tony: Andy and the original drummer Jeremy were playing. I am still not sure to this day how I ended up singing-whether they invited me or I informed them that I was singing. At that time there were a lot fewer straightforward punk rock bands-it was the heyday of metal core and emocore. We wanted to do something straight ahead. We figured out what we wanted to do along the way. Now we are sticking to that, but it wasn't preconceived.

MRR: And what would that be?

Tony: Now we are extremely, overtly political-but we don't want to hit people over the head with it. But we do-through cardboard! Rather than us being like, "Here is our politics," it's "Here is our politics and artwork and theatrics." We try to do something really fun and present ideas in a different way. We want to break down barriers with the audience and make everyone feel comfortable at shows.

MRR: I want to hear more about the role and visual art and aesthetics in your band.

John: It's a way to get politics across without being stuffy; sometimes don't think that fun and humor can go along with activism, and we think they can. Also, when we started, there were a lot of fights at shows. It worked-there haven't been fights at RAMBO shows here in Philly. It would be too silly. There was one in Winnipeg.

Tony: A lot of this has to do with having Mike Bukowski in the band. If you are going to be a band that has a message, everything that you produce, be it music, lyrics, or the cover of the records you put out should make a statement and have as much validity as the music you make. Having Mike in the band accomplishes that. He doesn't play an instrument, but he goes on all our tours and functions as a member of the band. Even though he is late to this interview! We initially asked him to help us with art, and we said instead of doing this for us, since you are our friend and have the same beliefs as us, why don't you join the band so that the work you produce won't be for us-it will just be us.

MRR: Tell me a little bit about why you band decided to get involved with the Ed Walters Records bike comp seven inch series (www.edwaltersrecords.org).

John: A lot of it is that our friend Mike Dailey does the Ed Walters label. He approached us about it when he had the idea. It was important to us for other reasons. It is part of our activism. Bands don't have to be a part of people's activism but it is for us. People writing me about bikes, that is social change right there.

(There is a frenzy of activity and apologies as the aforementioned Mike Bukowski arrives to the interview.)

Mike: I just woke up.

(The tape cuts off because I am a moron and ran out of batteries. We get batteries from John's stereo and are back in effect.)

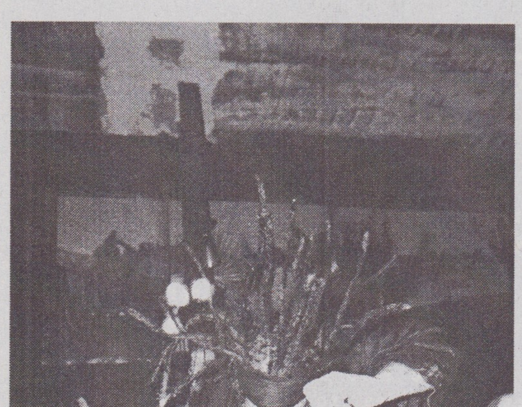
MRR: When you were younger, how did you become involved in social change and activism?

John: For me it was totally through music. When I was 12, there was this rapper named Paris and he was really overtly political. He had an album called *The Devil Made Me Do It* and I had been listening just to metal before then. This record had biographies of Huey Newton and the Black Panther Party, Marcus Garvey...I had never heard stuff like that. Metal bands don't have shit to say. I had heard Public Enemy, but that didn't speak to me as much as this did. I listened to it the other day though and it totally sucks as a record (laughter).It's just really dated, but then it was my favorite thing ever.

MRR: Do you feel you have a responsibility to kids younger than you who come out to your shows?

Mike: Now it's exciting because we are in the same position when we were younger, of being influenced by punk music and providing access to kids for ideas. I don't want to call us role models, but in a sense we are to younger kids that may expect some things from us. If we don't go out there and live the politics we talk about, we imply that it is enough just to be in a band. That's not what we want to do.

Bull: We play shows where we can potentially introduce peo-



Photos this page by Matt Average

ple to new ideas that they may not have heard about or experienced that could change them the way it changed us. That is where our responsibility lies.

MRR: What is it like to be part of the Philly punk/radical communities?

John: There are a lot of great organizations and projects to be part of. I would say that there are communities, plural. There is so much awesome stuff to do here. There are places like the Wooden Shoe, that Bull helps staff, that provides radical materials to the community. I can't imagine living anywhere else. It is a great place to live if you are interested in radical politics. You don't have to limit yourself to one project or group. There are local projects as well as national work.

Bull: There are thirty or so communal or group houses in this neighborhood alone, maybe not all identifying as anarchist but most of them activist. These are interesting-there is a lot of mutual aid going on. We help each other work on our houses. I am a little worried about the neighborhood because the University of Penn is encroaching on the neighborhood, pushing up property values, talking about new construction-the neighborhood is gradually turning more and more white, more and more middle class. I am a little worried about the longevity of the area. Just here, there are a ton of organizations that operate out of the A-Space, an anarchist community space. There is a food co-op next to that. The IWW just bought a building, and there is another community space opening up 10 or 15 blocks from here. All the group houses host benefit dinners, meetings, events-there is a bike loan program.

John: That is all just around here too!

MRR: I was at a show with a 95% white audience recently, a large audience. The band onstage was talking about gentrification in DC which hits close to home for me, because they were specifically talking about the building of the new convention center that is right next to my work. They were saying, "We all need to get involved and make a change!" I felt weird, and looked at my friend and said, "Well, aren't all us arty, punky white kids a part of the problem?" I got some mean looks and even my friend told me that she felt that the band was doing the right thing by bringing the issue up. Do you have any thoughts on how white, punk, radical kids can sometimes be facilitators for the first wave of gentrification, and ideas or strategies around negotiation of your occupation of that sort of position?

Bull: We as the punks and the activists in our cases need to recognize that we are the first wave. We move into cheaper houses in lower income neighborhoods. When white faces show up, other white people feel safer and start to move in. It is the formula for gentrification. A lot of people don't want to admit that because they are punks and they don't think that they could possibly be part of the problem. White punks moving in need to recognize that just by being there we are part of the problem, but just like everyone else we need somewhere to live. But I don't want to work full-time, and I don't want to live in downtown Philly where the rent is more expensive and you have a shitty place to live. So we choose to live in West Philly where the rent is cheaper. The best we can do is just to get involved in community organizations and do what we can to warn everyone around us of what is going on. The University of Penn is a non-profit, yet they bought a lot of the apartment buildings in our neighborhood, kicked out the people living in them, and starting renting them out to students. Of course, they are making a ton of money off of this endeavor, trying to make students and professors feel encouraged to live here. They have setups that will give professors a certain amount of money to buy a house in the neighborhood. I feel like they are doing the same thing now as they did 20-30 years ago to a neighborhood called the Black Bottom, when Drexel University decided they wanted to buy up properties and keep houses by declaring imminent domain on the neighborhood and forcing out people that didn't want to move to build student housing. Another sleazy thing that they did which I think they are trying to do in this neighborhood was to rewire all those housing units and re-inspect the old housing with the codes from the new buildings. This way, people would get kicked out because they couldn't afford the crazy renovations necessary to get their houses up to code. I fear that is going to start happening here because Licensing and Inspection has already started harassing some houses in this neighborhood.

John: This is not a problem that punks or activists can come into neighborhoods and solve on their own. There are community groups that have been dedicated to fighting this for years. It is not about coming in and trying to be the Great White Hope to save the neighborhood. There are people here who have a much greater stake in this than we do, from cradle

Photo by Mark Murrmann

to grave-if it comes to it, we can move somewhere else. Some people do not have that as an option. We don't claim to have all the answers, but we do believe in getting involved, beyond just the activism that white kids are engaged in. If you really are interested in having a sustainable relationship with your community, talk to your neighbors. Seek out groups. I think a lot of times punks and groups you mentioned before think it is okay to just do things in our isolated community and think that is enough. We tend to isolate ourselves. Everyone is guilty of this-I am too. But that is not how change is going to happen. I think the best we can do is work with the community that is present.

Bull: Talking about this issue on a stage is not enough. Saying something at a punk show is not enough.

John: That was always my problem with bands like Youth of Today-"make a change, make a change." Well, what? How?

Bull: Well, I give them some credit because it was influential to me...

John: Well, yeah, I'm not trying to diss...

Bull: It's just that, though. You have to back up your words. It's something that I want to do.

John: We shouldn't stay at a comfortable level with your activism. You should always push yourself.

MRR: What does the future hold for RAMBO?

Tony: We have plans to take over the world!

John: We are going to Europe in January for seven weeks, and that is huge for us but does require work.

Mike: I better start drawin'!

John: We have a split seven inch coming out with a band from Pittsburgh called Caustic Christ on our friend Chris' label from Sweden. We are writing new songs. We are writing a new album. We are basically just gearing up for tour. The new album is a long way off though.

Bull: When we get back from Europe I will be away for a while, in Maine harvesting seaweed.

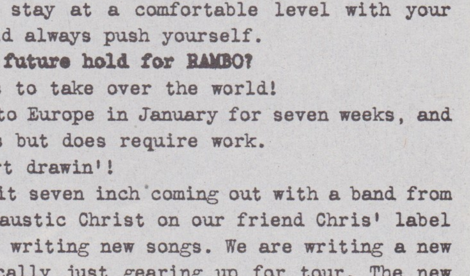
John: We are all super busy, but we're all really focused on these seven weeks coming up in Europe. We can't wait.

Contact RAMBO via:
5023 Cedar Ave. / Philadelphia, PA 19143
215.888.7580
tpointless@aol.com

RAMBO recommended several books and websites as well, which follow:

Books:
Fences and Windows by Naomi Klein
(globalization)
Censored 2003 by Peter Phillips and Project Censored
(25 censored news stories)
Silencing Political Dissent by Nancy Chang
(civil liberties post 9-11)
Dark Alliance by Gary Webb
(CIA, contras, cocaine)
Agents of Repression by Ward Churchill
(FBI and COINTELPRO)
Pacifism as Pathology by Ward Churchill
(thoughts on violence in class struggle)
A People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn
Anarchism by Daniel Guerin
No Gods No Master book 1 and 2 By Guerin
(overview of anarchism)
Terrorism and War by Howard Zinn
Myth of the Welfare Queen by David Zucchino
Feminist Theory by Bell Hooks
Assata by Assata Shakur
(autobiography of a radical black woman and black panther)

Websites:
www.indymedia.org
www.prisonactivist.org


NO CIRCLE PITS IN HEAVEN!

BLOWN TO BITS

BLOWN TO BITS ARE A LOCAL BAY AREA HARDCORE JUGGERNAUT, PLAYING D-TUNED HEAVY AS FUCK CRUSTY HARDCORE IN THE STYLE OF DOOM OR ANTISECT... THEY'VE BEEN PLUGGING AWAY FOR OVER TWO YEARS NOW, SO I FIGURED IT WAS ABOUT TIME THAT *MRR* HAD A SIT DOWN WITH THEM...

INTERVIEW BY MIKE THORN, PHOTO BY SUSAN P.U.N.K.

CONTACT BLOWN TO BITS via prettypissed@hotmail.com

Nick: I'm Nick. I play Drums.

Jim: I'm Jim, and I sing and write lyrics.

Jake: My mame's Jake. I play guitar, I skate, I like to hang out, (laughter) I'm an alcoholic... (Jim Teases him) Shut Up!

Patrick: I'm Patrick. I do that other thing in the band and I'm unemployed.

(Laughter)

Jake: Hey we got two cab drivers in the band.

Patrick: Jim especially doesn't like working.

Jim: Hey who does?

Nick: Yeah. No shit.

Jake: He's seriously got a problem. I don't mind working as long as I'm not paying taxes. That's the beauty of working under the table.

Jim: You don't pay taxes?

(Laughter)

Jim: What the fuck? We gotta kick him outta the band now!

(Laughter)

MRR: How long have you been playing together, and also, how did you get started and was there a project before this that fed into this, or was it...

Patrick: Totally together? November of 2000, but me and Nick have been playing for like ten or eleven years.

Nick: We've known each other for that long.

Patrick: I mean, we'd jam a long time ago, and Jake was in Oppressed Logic, Exit Wound,

MRR: All right, well a lot of people have been talking lately about how there's been an explosion of hard-core punk in San Francisco and the Bay Area in general. The Born/Dead interview mentioned this...

Jim: Were they talking shit about us?

MMR: They were... Born Dead was talking shit about you, and...

(laughter)

Jim: Really? Really.?!

Nick: We'll take care of that later. We'l take care of that god damn shit.That's why we've got Gabe…

(laughter)

Jim: He's our inside—our inside man.

MRR:Do you agree with that there has been a lot of—

Jim: A lot of bands that have started have all together like Brain Oil and STFU, an we all started playing shows together—

Patrick: Especially Born/Dead and STFU, and then just in this last year there's Deadfall there's Desolation–that's a great band...

Jim: And then there's Strung Up—there's a bunch of bands..

Patrick: Oh, and those kids from the West Bay…

Jim: Dystrophy.

Jim: And Sistema Brutale is a new band.

Nick: Their demo rips!

Jim: There's a reemergence I think of...

Nick: Hey, Stop talking!

(moment of silence followed by bursting laughter.)

Jim: It's an interview. You're supposed to talk.

Patrick: I know but you've gotta give other people a chance to talk.

Jim: So why don't you fucking say something?!!

Patrick: I'm trying to…The bands that have popped up over this last year—the majority are really good. You know, I'm just glad somebody's doing it. Even if they sound like other bands—I'm just glad somebody's doing it.

Nick: I think it's the best it's ever been in years here. I've lived here for 13 years now, I think right now is one of the best times in the Bay Area.

Jim: Yeah. There's a lot of local places to play like Mission Records and Burnt Ramen...

Patrick: I was really discouraged five years ago. In San Francisco everything just dropped off. Places were closing. Everyone's familiar with it, but it was just so depressing—I almost moved because of it. I'm just glad that I stuck around. I was within six months of moving if I hadn't met Nick, just walking down the street when just it was really—

Nick: He was gonna move to Seattle.

Patrick: It was an amazing—just the contrast between the two times. It's amazing and totally—what's going on in the scene—it's just really strong, and people know each other, but it's not just about who you know. They're really open to bringing in people from outside. At this point it's really super-open and I just hope it doesn't close in on itself like it did five years ago.

Jim: (Interrupting over Patrick.) I would like to say something on that note. The whole California scene has gotten a lot better basically, 'cause I grew up in L.A., and basically there's much more bands now and much more DIY shit going on. We went down there, and we played out in a dried lake bed, out in the middle of nowhere, and it was awesome. Like 75 kids showed up. A little autonomy going on in the dried lake bed, you know? All of us having fun and playing... Not everybody was watching all the bands, but everybody could hear, and just showing up was good enough. I was totally down with that, man.

Nick: You know how they say the scene is so strong know. People say the seeds are being planted to destroy everything. I hope it doesn't get to clicky and stand-offish. It's a really small minority, if you think about it globally, it's nice—

Jim: (Interupting) Sure there's gonna be cliques...

Nick: —that different scenes could get along out here. You got the kids from the West Bay, they show up to all the shows now.

Patrick: Well, seriously, bands want to move out here for this.

Jake: Then they found out how much rent is in San Francisco!

(Laughter.)

MRR: The Bay Area was hit pretty hard with the whole dot-com thing, and it kind of drove all the rents up and drove everyone away, do you think that the collapse of the dot-com thing has fed into there being a punk scene and people actually…

Patrick: I don't think so. I don't think the collapse fed into it. I think that the actual time and being before the collapse—when it was strong—that's when it started, I think. It fed into an underground that wanted to come together and survive. Artists were kicked out of their spaces—every form of artist, not just musicians... dance companies, everything you could think of. You know, that's just what happened. So I don't think the collapse fed into it so much, I think it just—the collapse may have opened up more space, I think. On that level, there's more space to do things. People were more inclined to open something where they might not have been able to before.

Nick: You'll find a way no matter what. I think people saw everything closing in and yeah, punks did pull together…

Jim: Especially in San Francisco.

Nick: I mean, everywhere there's becoming less and less space to express art or whatever. Less and less, you know, but they'll always find a way to make the most of nothing.

MRR: I guess that's what I was getting at...

Nick: That's what punk is, just making something out of nothing, productive

Jim: Or making nothing out of nothing.

(Laughter)

Jim: Take something and make it into nothing or do whatever you want with it—pervert it, twist it, toss it, smash it, burn it, whatever the hell you want. It's punk rock.

MRR: The other part of that question is: what would you say the biggest change has been from when you first moved here to what it is now? Is it completely different, is it…

Nick: The scene has cleaned up a lot, I think

Jake: When I first moved here in '89 it was rockin'. It was goin' on. There were a lot of good bands happening, and then towards the mid 90s it just dropped off.

Nick: There weren't as many good local bands as there are now.

Jim: See now it's a little more DIY instead of using a promoter at a big club. We've got places like Mission Records and Burnt Ramen. People put it on a little bit more you know like parties out in the East Bay and stuff, It's a little more…

Patrick: A little more DIY. But you know, back in '89 and '90 that's how San Francisco was. It was the club scene. It was 21 and over and it was happening. People were going to shows, it was always packed...

Jim: I think it's much better now, 'cause kids can come to shows, you can bring your own booze in, there's no security to beat you up...

MRR: One of the major things I've noticed here was that there was a big difference betwen 21 and over shows and all-ages shows

Jim: Bottom of the Hill, or like The Pound,

MRR: I mean you all have played both kinds of shows, right?

Jim: Yeah Yeah. We play Paradise, we're gonna play Molotov's soon.

Patrick: We play there a bunch…

Jim: And they're really cool. They like let everyone in for free and it's 21 and over, and I'm really not down with playing 21 and over, but it's really hard, like Nick said. When I first moved here there was no... the only clubs to go to were 21 and over here in the city. Gilman was the only place that was all-ages.

MRR: But which one would you prefer more?

All: (almostin unison): All-ages!

Jim: Most Definately All-ages.

Patrick: Kids come out and they have money to maybe actually buy something where as bar crowds—you don't sell merchandise in a bar, they want to save money for their beer. And they're not really into it. They're into socializing, and wanna drink beer and talk to their friends. I remember when we played Covered Wagon—I remember even when we played opening for the U.K Subs, I looked over at the bar and there must have been 50 people over there talking to each other…

Jim: That's what it's all about there…

Patrick: And that's why I like playing all ages.

Jim: (Impersonating a Bar Fly) 'look at me... my tatoos and my dread locks... and I'm so cool.'

(Laughter.)

Jake: Molotov's is definately the best 21—over

Jim: They like give you free beer and they pay you. And it's free. They pay you like 100 or 80 bucks, 75, whatever. They pay you pretty well.

Patrick: But it's not about money, right?

Jim: I don't know. Is it, Patrick?

(Laughter)

Nick: Well to be able to pay for practice space at least - To break even. We're not going to make money doing this. If we could at least pay for practice.

Patrick: Yeah practice space. That's the only thing.

MRR: OK, so your new 7" is coming out on Badman from the Czech Republic. How did you get hooked up with that?

Patrick: I put together our website so the name gets out there. People do a search for it usually and they'll come across it. Well this guy had been reading a lot about us in Maximumrocknrolll—we had been included every five or sixth months or something like that. I mean in a row—five or six months in a row. Our name was either mentioned, or we had a picture. He e-mailed me and said "I've been hearing a lot about you guys and I can't get a hold of your first EP" and I mailed him back and said "I will send you the first EP" and on the last spot I decided to throw in a rough tape of three songs off our new proposed 7" totally unmentioned. The vocals were fucked up—it wasn't mixed at all. He was just so impressed that he was like "I want to put it out." So that was that. He's pretty much gonna do some crazy colored vinyl and it's gonna be great!

MRR: I guess you'd mentioned that the music and lyrics are a lot angrier on the new record. What are the songs about on the new record? Tell me about the song "Absurd."

Jim: It's about landlords... Patrick asked me to write a song that was about that—It was this one song that we had around, but I could never write lyrics to go with the music.

Nick: It was like stickin' around for a year and we wanted to do something with it,

Patrick: Well, I wrote the first part, he wrote the chorus…

Jim: I think that paying for food and shelter is an obscene fucking absurd fuckin'...

Patrick: "You're not the victim, the victim is *me*." That's the wole point of the song.

Jim: Yeah, shelter is… it's insane that people are dying in the world because they don't have food or shelter—it's like fuck that.

MRR: Okay. What abourt the song "Axis of Evil?"

Patrick: A lot of the time the way I write my lyrics—I'll have an idea in mind, and I'll sometimes actually go through newspapers and take out key words and I'll just kind of write a song around some issue I'm really concerned with. And what I was concerned with was hidden labelling nations in an axis of evil, and it just brings a whole religious connotation into it which I totally do not agree with. And that may upset some people, but I'm not really a religious person at all and I think it has no place in politics.

Jim: And they want to go to war, and it's like death squad democracy. You go out there and you fuckin' kill people, and you fuckin' impose democracy upon people—and you do it by killing people—and it's horrible. That's how this country is run.

MRR: What else do you guys have planned, coming up, besides the 7" ?

Jim: Well hopefully we're gonna go to Europe next year.

Patrick: We're recording in spring and in Europe next fall.

Jim: Yeah 'cause Badman is gonna hook us up to go to the Czech republic, Prague,

Jake: Poland, Hungary,Sweden,

Jim: Poland's Hungry? What?

Jake: Sweden, Denmark, Germany... We're going to do a whole month, hopefully.

Nick: That and just keep trying to play good shows

Jim: Yeah I wanna put out a full-length. I would love to do a full-length

MRR: Any last comments?

Jim: I would like to say, I would like to thank all the punks in the Bay Area that come to our shows. And there is a scene, so motherfuckers that don't know about it, you're blind, and you're dumb.

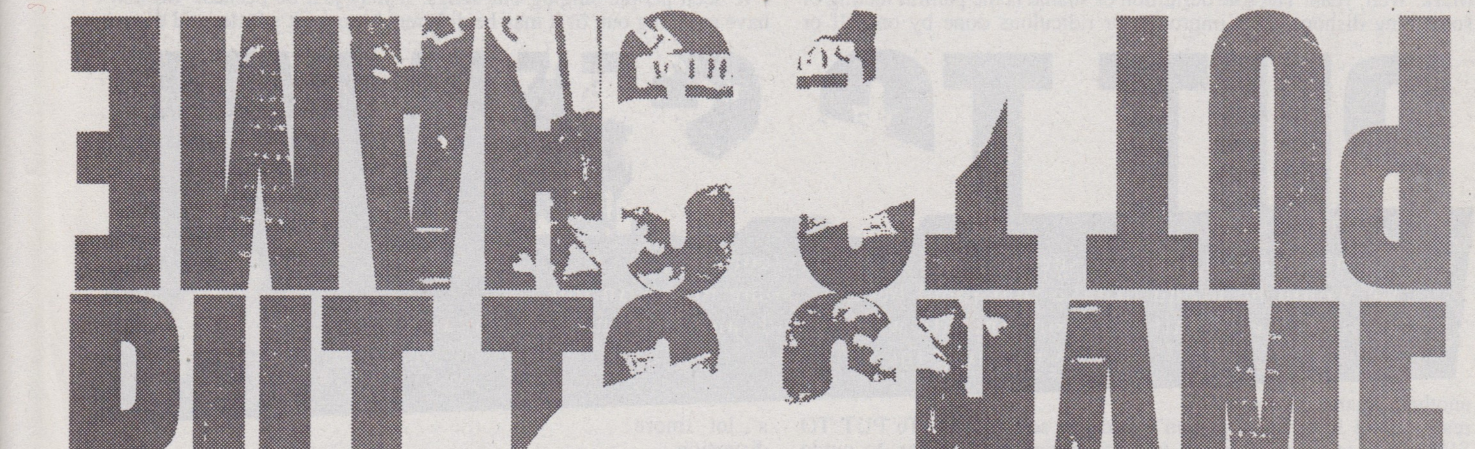
PUT TO SHAME is a band whose members live in Guelph, Burlington, and Acton, towns which make up some outlying scenes in Southern Ontario. Mark Davidson, formerly of HOCKEY TEETH and BRUTE CREATION, is on vocals. His old roommate Craig, who used to play in TENSION, plays bass. Jeremy, Roddy, and Anthony live in Guelph and fill out the rest of the roster. They play in another band called CENTRIFUGE.

Interview by
Stephe Perry.
Photos by Erik
Lovblom.

PUT TO SHAME

MRR: What bands you were previously in?
Jeremy: 5th DISTRICT and CENTRIFUGE.
Craig: TENSION and an old band called the FLOORLORDS.
Roddy: CENTRIFUGE, a couple of shows with FLASHLIGHT (BROWN), and I used to play in F.F.N (Full Frontal Nudity—if the price is right) when I lived in Utah.
Bortz: I used to play in CENTRIFUGE.
Mark: I used to play in HOCKEY TEETH and, way back in the 80s, a band called BRUTE CREATION—BRUTAL, as it has come to be known.
MRR: How was PUT TO SHAME formed?
Mark: HOCKEY TEETH was going through some "get together, not together" kind of crap, so I approached Craig to play bass in HOCKEY TEETH. He wasn't really comfortable with it, so he kindly declined. When HOCKEY TEETH broke up, I approached Craig and we formed a band called LEMMY'S MOLES with Derek Dykeman (of *Soap 'n Spikes* zine) and Terry Pritula. We played one show at the El Mo, but things didn't work out.
Craig: A couple of guys in Guelph had been bugging me to start a band with them. One of them was Drew, who was our old drummer, and another was Rod, who is sitting here today. So we got together with them. I think we played one or two shows with Drew before he decided to bow out because playing live wasn't his thing. Rod knew Bortz, we asked Bortz to join the sinking ship, and this is where we're at today. Oh, and Jeremy was a replacement for another guitar player that we had—he got himself a girlfriend and we haven't heard from him since.
Mark: Yeah, Yoko was her name, I think.
oddy: They stole my band!
MRR: What was the initial idea behind the band?
Mark: The whole premise behind the band (for me) is to meet lots of people, have lots of fun, and play before I end up in a wheelchair. That's about it.
Craig: I'm basically the same. I just want to get out there and play and meet people, travel around a bit; play with other cool bands that I like.
Mark: We used to meet at shows, and so the 80s sound is what we grew up on, and that's kind of where it has come back to.
MRR: Who do you consider influences on the band? How have other people described you?
Mark: I'm not sure if I agree with what other people say. It really doesn't matter.
MRR: Dude, you sound like Chi Pig.
Mark: Are you serious?
MRR: You totally do. You sound like the singer from SNFU.
Mark: Cool, because I love Chi Pig. Thanks. That's a compliment in my eyes.
Craig: That's better than the MINOR THREAT comparisons we always get.
MRR: It's because you hold the notes.
Mark: Except for when I'm like Cracker Jack. Arrghhhh. Who do we sound like? I think anything 80s is what we sound like. I think we just sound like PUT TO SHAME. Sometimes the hubcaps are on, sometimes they fall off.
MRR: What have people said about your sound?
Mark: Raeph from KILL YOUR IDOLS said we sound like SNFU meets UNIFORM CHOICE. I don't know. The MINOR THREAT thing, also we've had a CRO-MAGS comparison. Some guy in Guelph came up to us and said, "I hope this isn't an insult but you guys sound like CRO-MAGS."
Craig: I don't hear that myself.
Mark: Basically, if you can find an identity in anything we are doing that's cool because it obviously means that you're listening to that kind of music, and you're finding something that works for you and you're pulling it out of our band. I'm okay with that.
MRR: What bands do you listen to that influence PUT TO SHAME
Jeremy: THE FORGOTTEN, HUDSON FALCONS. I like a lot of the Canadian stuff that is coming out right now. THE CLASS, KING SIZE BRACES (who are not around anymore), CLASS ASSASSINS, RIOT99, lots of stuff.
MRR: More '77 style.
Jeremy: To some degree, that's getting kind of popular again, but there's lots of great stuff coming out now that is all over the place.
MRR: There's a lot of stuff out west like KNUCKLEHEAD and…
Jeremy: KNUCKLEHEAD is another amazing band. WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES, THE CLEATS—they have one of the best CDs I have ever heard.
Mark: People who know me know that I never got out of the 70s and 80s, so that's what I listen to the most. The first band I ever saw was the RAMONES in the summer of '79. I was eleven, and the FORGOTTEN REBELS opened. I think it was their first show. Bands I started listening to later were 7 SECONDS, YOUTH BRIGADE, YOUTH OF TODAY, MINOR THREAT, MDC, GBH, the EXPLOITED, CRASS, ENGLISH DOGS, HERESY, and, in my opinion one of

PUT TO SHAME



the most underrated bands of the genre, VERBAL ASSAULT. The DROPKICKS remind me of them a lot. I could go on and on about the 80s… In the early 90s I listened to a lot of the Fat and Epitaph crap because I love guitar oriented bands, so hoof me in the balls for that. I've been listening to the ULCER / DIRTY BIRD split 12" in the car—that was a great album. Current stuff I listen to would be bands like KILL YOUR IDOLS, DS-13, CRISPUS ATTUCKS, PANIC, of course my buddies in SUBMACHINE, NO WARNING, THE CONTROL, and a really good band I saw the other night called the PROWL. I also love local stuff. There really is nothing that I won't listen to at least five times before I say I can't take it. Local bands that I listen to, and love to play with, are ARMED & HAMMERED, RANDOM KILLING, MURDERSQUAD, and THE CLASS. We haven't had the chance to play with RIOT99 yet, but hopefully soon. There are a bunch of bands that have asked to play with us, not because of who we are (because we don't have anything released, so they wouldn't have heard us before), but just because they want to play. The fact that they want to get off their asses and play is why I want to have these bands on our bills. I don't need to hear MP3s, I don't need to go to websites, I just want to play. And if these bands have that same drive and motivation to get off the fuckin' chair then that's really all I need to add 'em to the bill. I don't need to hear the music. Long story longer… I've been influenced by every band I've seen and heard, and every major event in my life.

Craig: I like everything: punk, grind… I love the BATTALION OF SAINTS, I picked up a record a couple of weeks ago on Deranged by OUT COLD and I just love that record. A buddy of mine plays in a band called IN THE SHIT from Wales, and they played with OUT COLD. They toured Scotland, England and the States with them, and he was the one who e-mailed me and told me to check these guys out. I also like most of the local bands that we have played with. MURDERSQUAD, I like them, I just like that DISORDER sort of sound. I like anything. As long as it is three chords and is fast as hell, then it's right up my alley.

Bortz: I like all the heavy stuff. Whatever.

Jeremy: METALLICA, SLAYER…

Bortz: No, not METALLICA. METALLICA has got to get off that list, man. They have got to get rid of those dead-ass albums. I like SLAYER, BIOHAZARD… all your heavy stuff.

> "Thanks to all those that haven't jumped off the punk wagon and still come to shows. You are the scene."

Roddy: I am influenced by everything around me. You are influenced in a positive or negative way by different things, like, say you hear CELINE DION or something. That influences you in a negative way, so you decide that you do not like that, that you wouldn't ever want to create something so devoid and insipid.

Mark: "Titanic" was my favourite movie, man.

Roddy: Well, I am going to have to hurt you later on then. No, I don't know. The stuff I like is loud and fast.

Mark: You like the DESCENDENTS, let's just put it that way.

Roddy: And the RAMONES, SUPERSUCKERS, the REVEREND and this and that… rev it up and go.

MRR: What about the name PUT TO SHAME? Where does it come from? Is there significance behind it?

Mark: It's a dumb name when you look at it in the context of punk rock. It's not anti-system or something about a flag. It just sucks, really.

MRR: Is there a story behind it?

Mark: Well, yeah. The true definition of shame is the painful feeling of something dishonorable, improper, or ridiculous done by oneself or another. Shame is really about lowering a person's pride or self respect. To PUT TO SHAME is to cause a person to suffer shame or disgrace, to outdo them. It's really got a double meaning, so it's either a positive or a negative. You can put somebody to shame by excelling and doing very well for yourself, but on the other hand, that means the person or group you have done well against has not. I mean, not that this band ever became and followed the name. The name was already there when this line-up formed, but it has fit in perfectly with the band because some nights we seem to be on and some nights we just play really crappy. If we could coin a phrase—I don't know if there is such a thing as sloppy-core, but we would be proud to take that label because some nights in our minds we're shit, and some nights we're good, and it seems to have a double meaning there.

MRR: You have a couple of songs recorded. Are you guys going to release them or are they going to come out on a label?

Mark: Yeah, we actually have 14 songs recorded. The idea was to put out a 6 song CD that was recorded a little while ago to sell and give away at shows, and to do it as cheaply as pos-

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Craig: We just wanted something cheap so that we could get our sound and name out there.

MRR: Are the other songs going to go on a record?

Roddy: We'll put this out and see how it goes.

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MRR: Are the other songs going to go on a record?

Roddy: We'll put this out and see how it goes.

Craig: The other material will see the light of day.

Roddy: It will come out eventually, but I just want to… I've got new software to mix with that is a huge step up from anything I've used previously, and I'm trying to get my head around it, so it's progressed slowly. I'm getting to the point where we need just a little more E.Q. and it will be done. So once those 6 are done I can put the rest of the songs in.

to the other and we have fun with it. I basically write lyrics that have an element of humor that leads the reader to my point. I listen to all sorts of bands, from DAYGLO to CONFLICT!

MRR: What is your favorite song, from a lyrical standpoint?

Mark: There isn't one that stands out. They all mean something in their own way.

MRR: Is there one that you are particularly proud of or think you nailed in terms of getting the point across?

Mark: No. I think they all speak for themselves, and I am very proud of that. I usually start with a point of what I want to talk about, and then tell a story around it. And, as you can see, I have no problem with blabbing! If there is one song that I think is goofy, it's the song called "Flippantly Ascertaining". It's basically about how people get into something, try it out, and then jump ship. They go around preaching for their five minutes and then they move onto something else, andtime. Lyrically, it means everything to me, but if I were to stand back from the song and read it from someone else's point of view, I think it could be seen as a really crappy song.

MRR: Does anyone else in the band know any lyrics?

Mark: Not really. Jeremy sings along sometimes. In HOCKEY TEETH, everybody knew the lyrics: everybody that came to the show, everybody in the band. I think that that maintained in this band because I have a tendency to accentuate the note and the wording.

MRR: People can understand what you're singing.

Mark: Yeah. We were playing the Corktown one night and this friend of ours said, "You guys definitely have to put out a lyric sheet because I can't understand a bloody word you're saying." And I thought that was kind of interesting, because I've always been told otherwise, and I've seen people singing our songs. It may just be because we don't have anything out, or it may be different because it's faster and there is a lot more distortion.

MRR: Are there any last comments?

Mark: Yes. What's with the whole "pay to play" thing? Is the bar not getting 100% of the bar sales and, therefore, should the band not get the door? If the band wasn't playing that club, the bar would not be making any money. So why should we give some of the bands' hard-earned money to the club?

Craig: It is totally stupid.

MRR: It is definitely something that came up from the States. It's a phenomenon that happened in California first—I think some club owners got ahold of the idea that this was how they could make more money off bands.

Craig: Like bands have lots of money to throw around…

Mark: As if the owners don't make enough off the bar.

Roddy: I don't think clubs really do very much to support live music anymore. You might think that it would benefit everyone if clubs did more to promote shows, but instead it is left up to the bands, who are often coming from out of town and don't know the good places to stick posters, don't know the local media. The result is a crappy show with the bands playing to one another, and the bar sales are terrible. So the next week they just get a D.J. who plays exactly what people want to hear, and is far cheaper than putting on a live show that probably will not make them any money.

MRR: Right.

Mark: Anyway, come to one of our shows and take a turn screaming in the mic if you need to vent, and thanks to all those that haven't jumped off the punk wagon and still come to shows. More people at shows means more new bands springing up. You are the scene!

Roddy: Support noncorporate rock, because corporate rock never really stopped sucking.

Craig: I would like to say hi to my daughter Kennedy, who I hope is in bed right now.

Put To Shame, PO Box 7502,
1Millcroft Postal Outlet, Burlington, Ontario L7L 2C4, Canada.
Put_to_Shame@hotmail.com, www.puttoshame.com

DECONDITIONED

Deconditioned are a Seattle hardcore band that has been around for a little over a year. They have played scores of shows with such bands as Vitamin X, Toxic Narcotic and World Burns to Death. Deconditioned have toured the Western US and released a split 7" with Blastfo-me on Banal Existence Records (operated by Matt, the drummer). They are also planning to record another 7", also on Banal Existence, as well as a tour in spring 2003 (probably April).

Deconditioned is: Sam - bass; Matt - drums/vocals; Dan - vocals; McKenzie - guitar Interviewed by Meg Langford and Sarah Lily Timares.

MRR (Meg): So, what do you guys like about playing shows? I mean, how do you feed off the crowds?

Dan: For me, how the crowd responds really determines whether or not I have a lot of energy. I feel like I can put a lot more passion and emotion into if the crowd's moving. If they're standing still, I still do but I just feel like it's wasted.

Matt: For me that's what makes it a good show or not. It's not a good show if people don't dance, and for me that's the most important thing. That's why I play music, just to have a good time, and see people go crazy and go crazy myself, 'cause that's what I do when I see a band that I like. I like to dance and have fun. Why listen to hardcore or good fucking music, you know? Why be a music fan if you're not gonna have fun and you're not gonna enjoy it?

MRR (Meg): You guys are pretty political, lyrically and all that. So is there a driving force—a driving message behind this band?

Dan: For me, the name Deconditioned really means the undoing of social conditioning. As you grow up you just absorb a lot of fucked up stuff and to me what its about is just questioning why you're the way you are—questioning your passions and your desires, and your morals, basically everything. And if you think it's fucked up, making the change that you feel is necessary.

Sam: My bass teacher said that people only condition themselves.

Matt: For me it was important when we started this band, when Dan and I started this band, to have a political message and to be about something, not just playing music, which, we all love playing music, but we're about more than just that. I mean, we're all vegetarian or vegan, and that's really important to all of us, and we think that we need to treat animals with respect, and, the world, and we don't wanna see this fuckin' place gone before we're 65. And we're all pretty politically active. I was worked down in Oregon last month, to raise money for this tour. (ed. note: the record and tour were financed collectively by Deconditioned and Blastfo-me.) I was petitioning to raise minimum wage down there, door to door. We got passed on the ballot, and that was a pretty fuckin' cool thing to do, and get paid for. And just, being active in your day to day life and not being apathetic.

Dan: To help raise money for this tour I worked for the 177 initiative campaign which is to add 10 cents per drink tax to espresso beverages in the City of Seattle to help raise money for early childcare, such as subsidies for low/middle-income families who can't afford quality childcare. For me not only was this a great opportunity to earn money, but also a great way to put something I really care about—early childcare—into action.

MRR (Sarah/Lily): I know that animal rights are important to the members of the band, as you said. Now do animal rights play a part in your lives?

Sam: I don't eat animals.

Dan: It plays a big role in my life, In terms of what I eat. I don't eat any food that comes from animal products, at least not knowingly.

Mackenzie: Eat vegans!

Matt: It makes your cum taste better. The ladies like it if you're vegan. And the boys. And we all love the boys.

Dan: Yeah, I love the boys. Anyways, now that we've strayed about 6 million light-years away from our topic...

Matt: Hey, that's important.

Steven: The fact that you like the boys? (Steven is a friend of the band's)

Sam: Vegans don't eat cum.

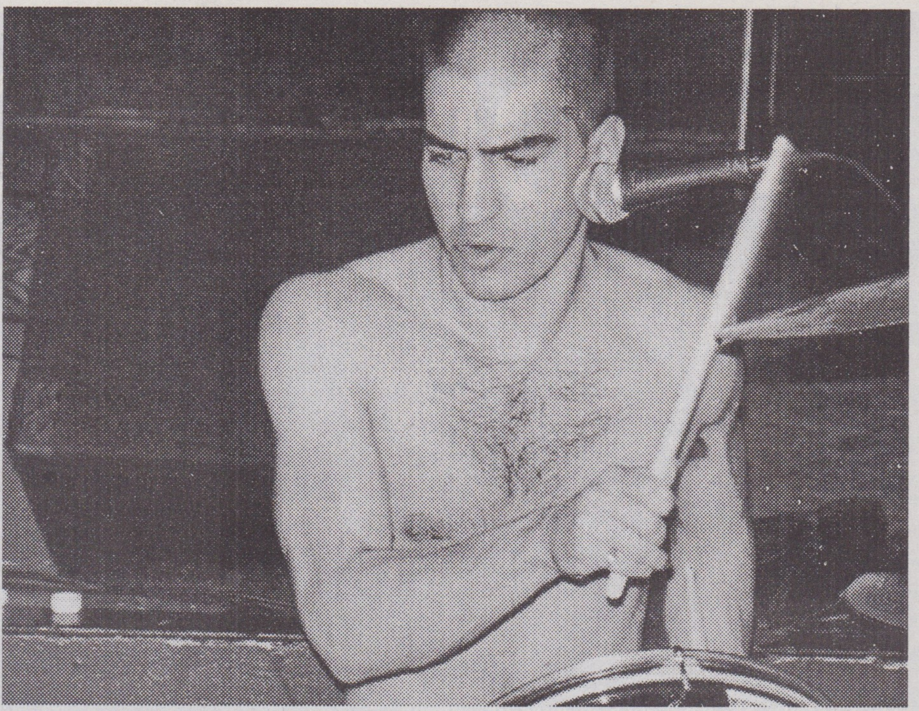
Matt: Yeah we do.

Sam: Only in certain foods!

Dan: Basically, one of the ways in which I live my life is to do the least possible amount of harm to all living things, animals and humans, and that's just basically the reason for animal rights playing a big role in my life. And how it does is basically doing my part to making sure that what I consume is not contributing to a system of animal suffering.

Matt: People are not above animals. Animals are on the same level of us, if not higher up. Most people think that we're above other things, and that they're here for our amusement, and that's fucked. When I was a kid, I never even wanted a pet. I have one now 'cause my family wanted one, but it's just like the idea of keeping anything captivated makes me sick to my stomach whenever I think about it. Even neutering or spaying an animal. I mean, it's human's fault that we have to do that, and how would you like it if you couldn't fucking have a kid if you wanted one? I mean, I love my brother and, I wouldn't be here if someone hadn't, you know, got some lovin'.

Sam: Well, you know, people say they're all better than animals because they learn to destroy themselves and each other. But you know, animals are pretty smart if they can learn to live somewhere without machines and being dependant on things. I wish I wasn't dependant on some of the things that I am now, but I don't really have a choice about it. And, I dunno, I feel like people are growing stupider and stupider as time goes on. And, they're also making the animals dependent on them, so they're making the animals stupider too.



MRR (Meg): There is the idea of being vegan as a way of life, veganism as a creed, and then there is the idea of it as just not eating meat and not eating animal's products. Do you think there's a difference?

Dan: I think so. I think that if someone says they're vegan for health reasons I don't consider them to be a vegan. 'Cause for me it's a lifestyle. And I feel like it's different than vegetarians, 'cause certainly that's an important step, and if someone's vegetarian, I'm really proud enough of them. I mean, I see the commitment as, basically, living a cruelty-free lifestyle.

Matt: If it's not a lifestyle, you're full of shit. Oh, one more thing I wanted to say about the message of our band, for me it's about, first and foremost, you gotta enjoy the good things in people and life. You know, don't be too fucking PC to appreciate people, and don't be too high and mighty 'cause everybody has their flaws, and somewhere in there in most people there's goodness. You gotta appreciate the goodness in people. Don't "call out" people for every little comment they make. Worthless!

MRR (Meg): Do you guys consider hardcore to be its own style of music, or part of punk?

Matt: Yeah, I consider hardcore a form of punk, and if you're playing hardcore you're either playing punk or you're playing metal. It's hardcore punk. If it's not hardcore punk, you're playing metal.

McKenzie: Yeah, I agree that hardcore... it's part of punk. 'Cause without punk there would be no hardcore.

Matt: It's about silly kids who got shit in high school and in middle school, who felt out of place, and felt isolated from the world, and people who feel alone getting out their energy and their aggressions and fuckin' dealing with life on their own terms. It's just having a good time and being dorky and not being a dick and not being macho. And dancing how you want, and being crazy, but not being too violent, that's what it's about.

Sam: And then there are bands who stand for everything opposite of that. They're macho and they have stupid tough guy attitudes.

MRR (Meg): What do you guys think of the whole scene thing? Do you feel that scenes now really are true to punk values? Punk scenes and hardcore scenes—do you feel like they're really true to the original values, the core values?

Dan: Absolutey not. I don't. I see it entirely about commodification and social cliques and the fact that you know, often times kids who aren't part of a scene really feel excluded. Fortunately there are bands that still do practice a DIY ethic, but a lot of them say, 'oh yeah its easier to have some fuckin' label cut me, put out our record and sponsor us.'

Matt: And people telling you what DIY ethic means—like, telling you that you're not doing it in their eyes—is just bullshit.

MRR (Sarah): So, what bands influenced you?

MRR (Meg): Before and now. What influenced you to start getting into hardcore and punk and what bands are you liking now?

Matt: I've wanted to be in a touring band and do nothing but play music since I was 13. And for me that's all because of Nirvana, and I'm proud to say that. The Melvins are my favorite band. I started going to rock shows when I was 12, and I decided that I wanted to play guitar when I was 13. But anyway, I like Gang Green, old Boston shit like Jerry's Kids and the Proletariat, Gang of Four, The Gits, early Corrosion of Conformity, Decrepit...

Sam: Minor threat, naturally.

Matt: Yeah, Black Flag. You guys can just interject. Fucking Dick Dale, AC/DC, Mark Lanegan. J. Mascis, Bob Dylan, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Django Rhinehardt, Ventures, Void, Faith, Black Sabbath (Sam: saaaabatthhh.), Dead Moon. Right now, I'm really into Charlie Christian, an amazing jazz guitarist from the late 30s, who died when he was 23.

McKenzie: Anti-Flag.

Sam: Of the few riffs I did write for the band, I made them all up after listening to either the Tear It Up/E.T.A. split, the first Suicidal Tendencies LP, or anything from What Happens Next?. A lot of the bass lines I write are influenced by Parliament and Ensign. Warzone owns all. Yeah. Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin. Yes (the band). I'm not joking.

Matt: Oh yeah, Poison Idea and S.O.A. are like, two of my favorite bands ever. And not to mention...Dude, therers gotta be some metal. We gotta give the big up to metal. Napalm Death, Terrorizer, Entombed, and lots of 80s speed/thrash metal...

Dan: I constantly find myself getting into different genres and subgenres, and I think the songs that I write and my vocal style is basically going to depend a lot on the music that I'm listening to at the time. I started out listening to Youth Crew, and then I got into crust, and now I'm into old school hardcore like Circle Jerks, Suicidal Tendencies, Black Flag, Jerry's Kids, Urban Waste, Gang Green, Verbal Abuse.

MRR (Meg): So what new bands are you guys really excited about?

Dan: I'm actually really excited about a new band called The Rites, made up of members of Tear It Up and Down in Flames.

Matt: Skarp are my favorite local band. We always love to see Skarp. And The Gossip. I like to shake my ass all night long. I love to dance. And I don't mean just slam dancing.

Sam: You know who else likes to dance to The Gossip? The singer of The Blood Brothers!

Matt: Oh, and I'm serious, Vitamin X is fucking rad, We had the extreme wonderful pleasure of playing with them. And they were the shit, They totally blew me away. We also played with Garuda and Bumbklaat—wonderful guys and great bands. Oh yeah, Hellshock, Atrocious Madness, Jellyroll Rockheads, Fall of the Bastards, who are rad, epic, crusty metal from PDX...

MRR (Meg): So, how is a song written in your band?

Sam: If Matt makes up a song me and Mckenzie will occasionally add something to it.

Matt: Yeah, werre becoming more and more of a full-on collaborating band, every practice. We're starting to really gel and it's the best band I've ever been in. Everyone in it I really like, they're some of my best friends. Well, I'll just come up with some riffs, and I'll bring it to everybody, and we'll jam it out and see what order we want it to go in. More and more everyone's starting to write and come up with shit. Our newest songs were equally written by everybody, pretty much. And I wrote lyrics to one song, which was about anorexia and bulimia and people's dreams getting crushed and their hopes being shot down. It was inspired by some people that were very close to me, who felt like their bodies weren't good enough they way they were, and it just made my heart sink into my stomach, I felt so sad about that, I had to write a song about it.

Dan: I kinda come up with lyrics tne same way—just something that upsets me. With, for example, the song "Unamerican," it's basically what the title means is I feel like people who have so much love for the country are really not upholding the values on which the country was founded, and I feel like that's—

Sam: The values on which the country were founded were murder and rape! If you'd ever read the chapter about the Trail of Tears in *A People's History of the United States*—

Dan: I'm familiar with the Trail of Tears. Alright, let me rephrase that then, 'cause you actually brought up a good point. For example, one thing this country was founded on was freedom of speech, and yet, when I said I was sick cf seeing the American flag everywhere, my mom was like 'you can think that, but don't say it.'

Matt: And then basically, once there's lyrics, and the music, we all come up with the music, and we fit lyrics to the songs, to however it works, but the music comes first.

MRR (Meg): How has your attitude towards playing changed since tour?

Matt: I play a lot more aggressively, and have a lot more of a fuck-you attitude about it. We're gonna play and we're gonna play as hard as we can every night.

Sam: Ditto. Ever since tour I've been like, 'Fuck you, go get a new snare drum NOW.' (Laughter)

Dan: It's made me not care as much about what other people think. There are enough people that have a problem with us, but there are enough people that like us, so it's given us the liberty to do whatever we want. We've toured the western part of the country, we've seen a lot of the same bullshit going on everywhere, so I think it's a lot more important to focus on music and politics and ourselves and what we feel strongly about, rather than cater to a particular scene

Matt: Now, I just want to play music every minute of the fucking day, because I can see that it will actually take us places, we can really just get up and go. It makes me really just want to play balls-out.

Sam: We qotta fuckin' kick it though, cause the show starts in half an hour.

Matt: Razed is the best band ever in the entire Northwest, (Sam: And we'll fucking miss them!) so we have to go see therm, and you all should cry because they never put out a record, and you will never hear them and that's really sad.

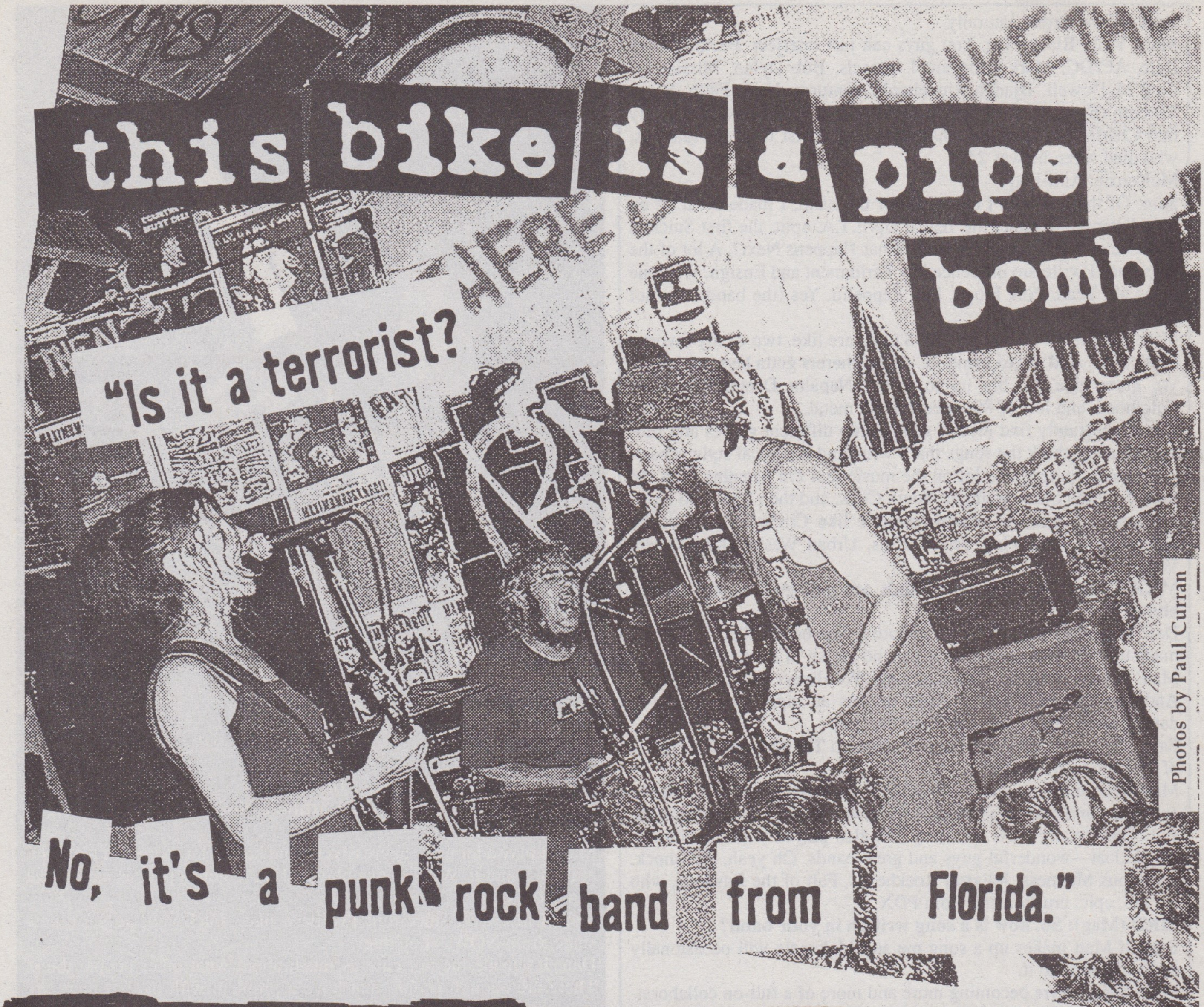
You can contact Matt about his label or zine (Banal Existence) at: 2706 Harvard Ave. E., Seattle WA, 98102.

To contact Deconditioned, you can email Matt (matthewfoley@bust.com) or Dan (xreclaimitx@equalvision.net) or write to the address above.

Contact Meg/ *Dude, I'll Be So Metal* zine at: 2909 Fairmount Ave. SW, Seattle WA, 98116.

this bike is a pipe bomb

"Is it a terrorist? No, it's a punk rock band from Florida."



Photos by Paul Curran

Anandi and Sara interviewed This Bike is a Pipebomb on a monday evening on the stage at Mission Records located in the lovely urine soaked Mission District in San Francisco.

MRR: Tell us about how people have been harrased about having your stickers on their bikes and stuff...

RyMoDee: Well, there's been several incidents but what I can remember right now is Washinington DC., that being the most ridiculous. The Washington D.C. SWAT team, bomb sniffing robots and dogs, came out to the metro and shut it down for over two hours.

Terrie: Two hours and thirty eight minutes.

RyMoDee: Just cause some woman had a This Bike is a Pipe Bomb sticker on her scooter.

MRR: How did you guys find out about this?

RyMoDee: Someone sent us an email.

Terrie: No, it was on the AP wire. I mean, you shut down the metro for two hours and thirty-eight minutes, it's a big deal!

MRR: It said the name of the band in the article?

Terrie: Yeah, yeah!

RyMoDee: Well actually the headline was..."Metro shuts down, what's the cause? Punk Rockers!"

MRR: Awesome!

RyMoDee: Did anyone call me, or Terrie or Ted? No, they just found out!

Terrie: So the article read something like, "Is it a terrorist? No it's a punk rock band from Florida."

MRR: Where did the name come from?

RyMoDee: We used to be a new wave band about eight years ago.

Terrie: We were the original Devo actually. They got the idea from us.

RyMoDee: It was in 1993 or 1994 that we started. And like we had this guy who was the lead singer and he was very influenced by Devo. We were together for like two weeks and we had a two week tour planned. So every day we were like, "Oh what can we do, we need a name". We had to book shows and we just decided on This Bike is a Pipe Bomb cause we were all bike enthusiasts at the time- and still -so it just stuck.

Terrie: But the thing is that the two people in the band with us, who were both named Scott, they fucking hated it.

RyMoDee: So me and Terrie, the only people who loved that name, are the only people left. We fucking took it.

Ted: Wait, wait, wait. I was the original roadie and I liked that name.

Terrie: He was the original roadie.

MRR: And then you got sucked into playing drums.

Ted: Yeah that's really true. RyMo came to me and he said, "Hey what are you doing next week?" and I said, "I gotta work" and he's like, "do you want to go on tour with us?" and I was like "well, you guys could probably sell your merchandise yourselves, you don't really need a roadie or anything." And they were like, "no you're going to play drums" and I'm just like, "I've never played drums before in my life!"
(much laughter all around)
Terrie: It was really like that.
Ted: And I actually really hated the music at the time. I learned to love it because it's much better now that I play drums.
(more laughing)
Ted: Back then it was really horrible
MRR: Your music is, uh,...
RyMoDee: Boring?

RyMoDee: This interview is going to suck. Arwen's gonna kick my ass.
MRR: Why is Arwen gonna kick your ass? Do you wanna talk about that?
(Screams of no, no...)
RyMoDee: Ted made me swear that I wouldn't say anything about that.
Ted: You can talk about that all you want.
Terrie: The thing is, we're idiots. We're a bunch of stupid redneck asshole Floridians. And so we write these songs, and we're really sincere and they're really genuine and they're really heartfelt, you know. But we're from the south, and we all laugh about shit too much, which makes us ridiculous to the rest of the world. But I don't blame anyone on the West Coast for listening to us and going you're full of shit, or whatever.

THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB - "Black Panther Party" EP

. . . the railriding, acoustic idyll of this EP feels exhausted. The title track, a plea for solidarity to "Mr. Black Panther" (first of all, what about Angela Davis, et al?) which contains the lines, "we'll go marching arm in arm/we don't mean no harm," strikes me as very naive, painfully anachronistic, and somewhat belittling. At least MC5 manager John Sinclair, when he had similar impulses in the late '60s, believed in loud guitars, started the White Panther Party, and did jail time. . . . (AC)

MRR: No, I was gonna say...
RyMoDee: Yes!
MRR: But your music, it's not typically punk rock.
Terrie: What?!! We've only got like four chords, how could it not be punk rock?....Wait what's your question? It's not typically punk rock, so?
MRR: Well do you consider it punk rock?
Terrie: Totally! Well,..
RyMoDee: There's yeses and there's noses.
Terrie: I'm just gonna say; in my heart of hearts I would like for people to listen to our music and say, "it's country music."
MRR: Right...
Terrie: But I know that that doesn't really happen cause I look at the audience and they're always all punks and sometimes when we're playing, I'm like, "how the fuck are we playing this song so fast ?" We write them and they kind of sound like this.. (slowly) "bomb bomb bomb"...but they come out like this...(fast)"arrr rrrrr rrrrr rrr!". Like, some day when we get ourselves organised and everything's working right...
Ted: A.A.
Terrie: Ha, and when we get in an A.A. program. (laughs) When we can afford Betty Ford, we're gonna be a country band, seriously. Can I get up on another beer?
(Here ensues chaos. Clinking of bottles, reprimanding of RyMo for spilling beer onto everyone.)

MRR: What exactly was said?
Terrie: It doesn't matter and all the people involved are wonderful. And I completly understand how they would listen to our record and go, "These people are fucking idiots they don't know anything about this". But the thing is, it's really real, RyMoDee tried to join the Black Panther party. For three years they ignored him, for three solid fucking goddamned years. And that's what that song is about, you know. But you can read about anything anyone does and assume anything cause you don't know the story. And now we're all friends. And now we've talked about it and those people are really sweet to us and we really like them, but as strangers when all you have to go by is a stupid 7"...hey, no hard feeling is what I'm saying. And I'm gonna tell you that that's not even the issue with *MRR* . The real deal is first of all, so we're a band, we're a punk rock band, and we sent a 7" to *MRR*. Three years later we meet a guy who's like, "oh man I have your 7" I found it in the throwaway bin at *Maximum*."
RyMoDee: That was the best moment of my life to hear someone say, "I love your 7".. "oh really where did you get it no one has that 7"?" -"Oh at *Maximum*, I found it in the garbage." As much as that sucks, cause I love *MRR*, it's like so great to have someone go through the garbage and find my 7"...
Terrie: That was pretty awesome.
Ted: That's when you know you've made it, when people are

digging your 7" out of the trash instead of the record store..

Terrie: And here's the better one, and then we fucking make this record that we're all so proud of, our great friend Spot, who is fucking amazing, takes the time to come to Austin and record with us...

RyMoDee: And he's fucking part of '80s punk rock history!

Terrie: And we have this CD that we're really really proud of and we send it in to *MRR*, and this is like the greatest part of our history,..."it wasn't a party, and we didn't dance!"

RyMoDee: The name of our CD was "Dance Party with This Bike is a Pipe Bomb", and the review was, " it wasn't a party, and I didn't dance."

(laughter)

Terrie: And that's the first *MRR* review we ever got.

RyMoDee: The first recording, they threw it in the garbage, the second thing, they were like, "this is bullshit, I hate it."

Ted: No no no, but the one that says, it wasn't a party, I didn't dance, the person you could tell didn't like it, they kind of at least describe the music, they say, kind of a country Crimpshrine or something...it's probably the best thing you could say to some young punk kid...

Terrie: We were all really excited..we were like "yes, they took the time to listen to our music!"

RyMoDee: They finally recognized that we're human beings!

Ted: We sold literally, like three CDs, off of that.

Terrie: We made, like $6.

MRR: Tell us about Spot.

RyMoDee: Spot? He's a fifteen year old man in a sixty year old body!

Terrie: It's true! He eats a clove of garlic every day, he's the most hyper individual you'll ever know, he's a sweetheart, and he has the craziest voice I think I've ever heard on anyone.

RyMoDee: He belongs in a PeeWee Herman movie.

Terrie: He's amazing

MRR: Is he a member of the band?

Terrie: He's officially a member

RyMoDee: He played on the first CD and he toured with us for the first couple years, when we changed over.

MRR: Changed over?!

Terrie: When we went from new wave to, um...

Ted: No they're saying, when they were bad before they had a good drummer... If you talk to Spot about his punk past, he'll deny it...he'll say, wait, yeah I think maybe I have heard of Husker Du before, knowing that he's worked with them and a lot of other SST bands.. I guess he was working in a recording studio, and some punk bands started going there, and he hit it off with the punk bands and ended up doing a lot of producing for them.

Terrie: He was actually the producer for SST. Greg Ginn wanted Spot to produce all of the SST records and that was the deal so no matter what studio you were in, Greg Ginn would send Spot there. All the SST records from the 80s, Spot produced them.

Ted: But all of that producing aside, he's really an amazing musician and person to hang out with, one of the most humble people...great banjo player, he can play just about anything...he plays Celtic festivals.

Terrie: He's probably a good kisser too.

MRR: What does he play with your band?

RyMoDee: When he's with us he plays the fidola, which is a viola pretty much. But he plays guitar as well.

Terrie: He plays his viola like a fiddle.

MRR: You guys tour constantly it seems like...are you really on tour all the time, are you ever at home?

Ted: We tour probably four months out of the year at the most, but it's like, none of us really work a lot, or do much..

MRR: Does the band sustain you financially?

Ted: (emphatically) No. We don't take any money from the band, it all goes back into records and projects and the van and tours and stuff..

RyMoDee: We're fucking broke as shit...You guys haven't talked about folk music at all!

MRR: So what's this with the folk music? Is what you play folk music?

RyMoDee: Yes! Because you know what, we know three chords!

Ted: Wait, that's exactly what you said when they asked if we played punk music!

RyMoDee: Oh, you're right...it's the same fucking thing!

Terrie: I think that punk music is the folk music of our generation...

MRR: But you're not playing, like, Ramones style, you're playing the folk music of a different generation...

Terrie: We're influenced by it but we're not really playing it, you listen to our music and it's totally punk rock style, but if you're gonna attach labels to it it is folk music...that's the music that we care about. We did a folk tour- we put together this collection of songs, and they're all old traditional folk songs, IWW songs and railway songs and stuff and we decided that we would take those songs to where we normally play, basements and houses, because the fact is that punk rockers and punk rock, we really are the real deal...if you're gonna pass the torch of folk music it's gonna be to punks, it really makes sense. Those are the people who care, are protesting in the streets and who care about social issues, about poverty and war. So we're like, here we are, we're people who care about traditional folk music but we have these inroads, to punks...we can go to these houses... so we did this tour. We chose pretty carefully this body of songs we were gonna sing, we wanted a really good mix. And we made a song book and we sent them out, with all the chords and all the songs, and we were like, this isn't about us coming there and performing and you guys watching us, it's about, we're gonna come to your town and we're all gonna play music together. Some towns it worked out better than others, people actually showed up with instruments and they played along, and it was fucking amazing! Cause they were all punks! And it made so much sense!

Ted: It was also cool, cause the same thing that happened to us, doing the research, finding these songs that we really wanted to play, it seems like happened to some of the younger kids who were really into it...they did a little research on their own, which was really cool...

Terrie: Yeah. Actually one of our big goals right now, we've been writing off for grant money and we want to do a double record set of folk songs...

RyMoDee: Any other country knows what their natural music is, what their folk music is, America doesn't.

Terrie: Yeah. Iit's really interesting, in a country where it's all mall culture...that is our culture, that music. So fo us, it makes sense, to seek that out.

Ted: A lot of those songs, for me, tell the story that the history books in high school don'tl...from the people who actually suffered all the horrible things that were happening, that are stil happening. It almost seems like the same.. like a lot of the punk songs these days have the same knid of reasoning..the lyrics have the same reasoning as they had back in the old times..

Terrie: And punk music really is the only music that exists that cares about any of that stuff, it really is the modern folk music.. I really believe that, you know. And so even when we play our songs really fast it's folk music to me.

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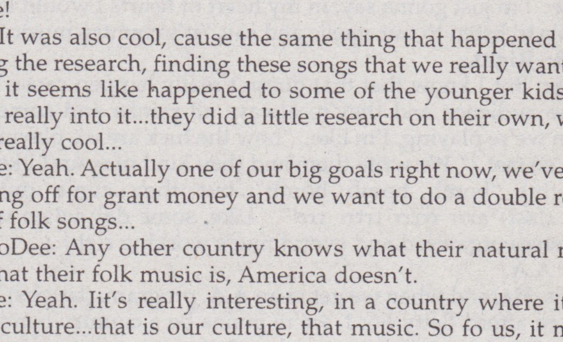

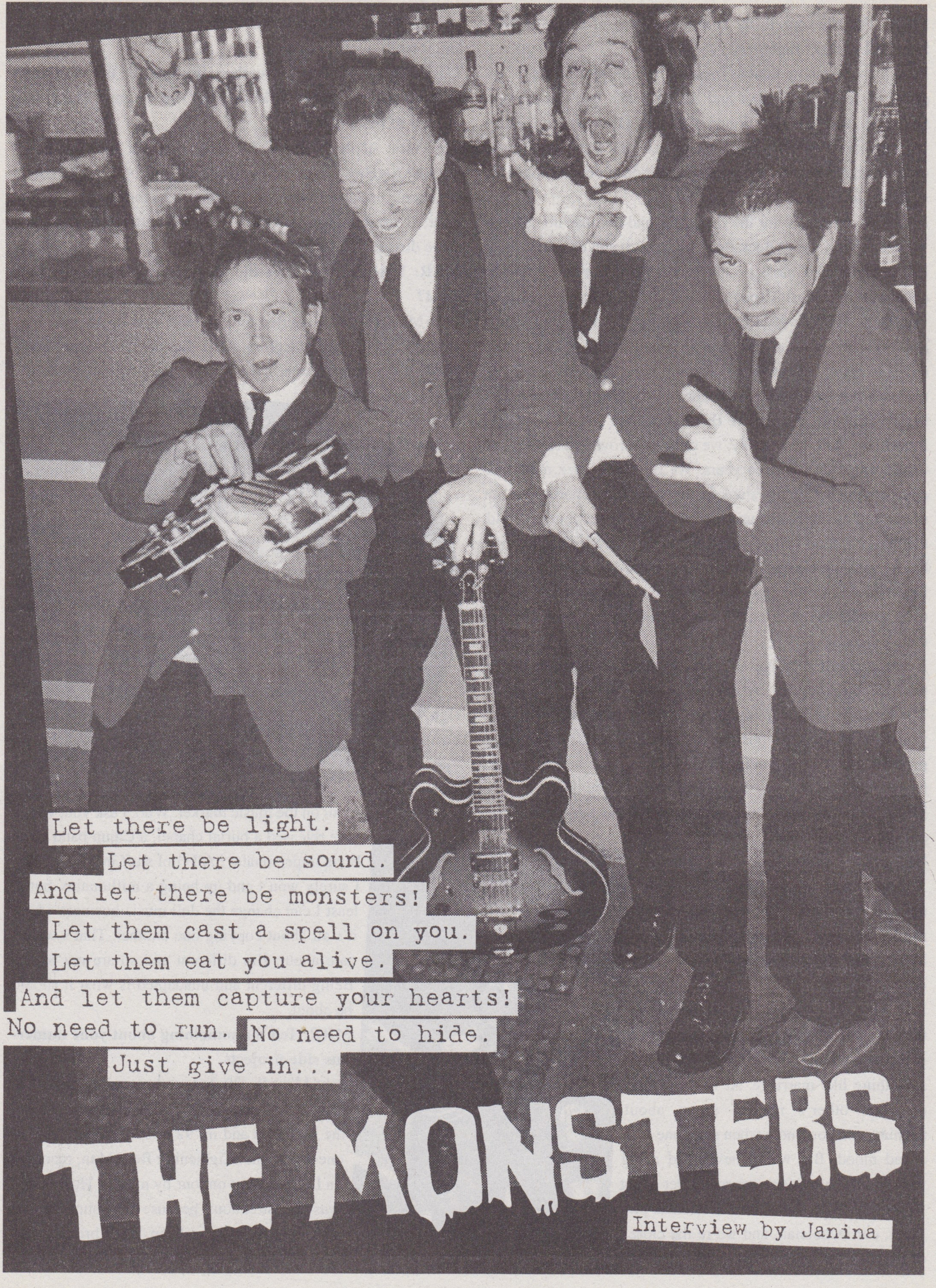

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THE MONSTERS

Interview by Janina

MRR: Tell me something about the birth of the Monsters. How did you get together?

Beat-Man: We started out as friends and colleagues back in '84, going to concerts together and seeing bands like the Cramps, Gun Club, and Alien Sex Fiend. And that's how we got to playing that sort of music. I already played in a New Wave band called Anti Statek; the songs were about dead people, shadows, and stuff like that.

In '86, we rehearsed for the first time, and because no one else wanted to sing, I did. Back then, I was such shit on guitar that I left it unplugged most of the time. We had several line-up changes until Janosh (bass) joined in a year later. He was even worse than me! We always had to stop in the middle of a song and Yves, our first guitarist, had to take his hand to slip it from chord to chord. However, he learned quite fast and in '88 we recorded our first single for Record Junkie, *Nightmares.*

MRR: How did you evolve throughout the years?

Beat-Man: Well, technically, we didn't improve as much as one would think after sixteen years. We're still no jazz musicians and, actually, we're still stuck on the same three chords. But our music and our lives changed simultaneously. As you grow old, the things around you get more and more complicated and even harder, and life can grow colder. It gets hard to take things easily when you're not eighteen anymore. Situations change. We tried to take the core out of complicated things and to bring them on-stage.

It was, and still is, important to me to make a song as simple as possible, but with that certain catchy tune you won't forget.

The lyrics have really lost their positive side throughout the years. There's not one positive syllable in them anymore; all is pretty negative at the moment. But it should be looked at with irony and black humor—like world affairs these days!

MRR: How do you write songs, and what are your lyrics about?

Beat-Man: I create them alone at home. Actually, there are no lyrics. I think the music is the most important thing about music. Otherwise, I'd write a book.

MRR: Did the years weld you together?

Beat-Man: We've been good friends from the start, but when you're playing together in a band, it surely welds you together. It's something like marriage. At first, you get on each other's nerves, argue about peanuts, and you know when someone is in a bad mood. But we've never had a big fight in all these years; we really get along with each other. We're four musicians plus Pumi, our technician, and we're the closest of friends. If someone is in trouble, we back him up. It's a really good basis for playing together in a band, and it really works out well.

MRR: How hard is it to weather through this life of recording and playing shows? I know that you've got a family—is it hard to prioritize?

Beat-Man: At the moment, it's quite hard for me. I'm going through rough times at the moment. Except for that, it's not so strenuous, because I'm a work-a-holic and a tough guy. My son, Chet, is most important in my life—the rest follows at quite some distance!

MRR: When did you get the idea of creating you're own label?

Beat-Man: When we started out, no label was interested in us, and so we put it out ourselves. After that the labels were interested. It's a funny game. Labels never take risks. I made my label different, we take quite a risk and we sign bands that other labels think are too weird to prevail on the music market. Who, I ask you, would have released a burial chapel, a Cajun band or an Elvis impersonator? All cool stuff in my opinion. I surely won't end up being a millionaire, but at least I can change the dull music business where it's all about copying one another. That's what I care about; I'm different and so are my bands. Being different and unadapted is what it should be about.

MRR: Tell me something about your numerous side-projects.

Beat-Man: In '80, I started recording myself as a one-man band, Taeb Zerfall. Then we started the Monsters and in '92 or so. I started another one-man band, Lightening Beat-Man, recorded an LP, and went on tour by myself. However, it was too strenuous because that show was a wrestling show as well. In '98, I broke something in my back and I lost my voice for a year, so I quit. At that time my whole private life changed rapidly. As the millennium changed, something struck me and told me to preach Rock 'n' Roll and Blues Trash. And that's what I did then and still do as Reverend Beat-Man.

My recent project is Die Zorros. Some theater director asked me if I would like to work with Olif M. Guz and Patrik Abt for a primitive peasant stage play about a guy who wants to kill himself, and everyone around him makes a big party out of it. That worked out so well that we thought we could just keep on making music together! Our first album should be out by the time this goes to print. But I have to say something: when we started out, we agreed that everyone should play the instrument he can master the least. So, I'm playing drums. It is drastically desolate what were trying to do there—striptease and Red Light District music from the 60s and 70s!

MRR: How did you get to use a "clone" drumset—the first one ever!

Beat-Man: Di Putto wasn't able to accompany us on all of our tours because he's the one with a regular job. So we asked Swan Lee to come along for one tour and it worked out great. When we rehearse we have two drummers anyway, and as each one has his own style, we thought it'd be a good idea to use two drumsets. It pushes the music a bit more. But I thought the picture was too boring with two drum sets and the tour bus was too small anyway.So we started to use only one kick drum with each hitting on one side. You need a special technique to do that because you have to consider the re-hit. But all worked out well, and when both drummers are available we're using the clone drum set on tour. It's the world's first one, yeah! We put thousands of francs into its development to get to a high quality sound.

MRR: What bands do you like to play with? Who would you like to?

Beat-Man: We loved the show with El Guapo Stunt Team. They are great guys and we fit together pretty good, although our music is completely different. We usually always have good support bands who give their best on stage. And that's good. At the moment I can't think of another band I'd like to play with.

MRR: Any future plans?

Beat-Man: Absolutely none. Maybe staying alive and being here tomorrow!

MRR: Is there a life after the band?

Beat-Man: The band will always be there, otherwise we wouldn't have released anything! We're already part of rock history—although people try their best to ignore us! But that doesn't matter—doing things is important.

MRR: Is there a worldly wisdom you could mediate to the fans?

Beat-Man: Better not. I'm in a relatively negative stage of my life and I don't think I could give any good advice right now.

MRR: Any funny tour stories?

Beat-Man: There are hundreds of them. But this one is quite funny, I think. When I put new strings on my guitar I always roll them up at the top of my guitar's neck so I don't have to cut them. So, we were playing somewhere and rockin' like hell, and I started waving my guitar around the crowd. One guy put his fingers into this coil and got stuck because they tightened up. So we had to continue with that guy sticking to my guitar—and when I pushed the song a little more, he nearly got his finger cut off!

Another good story is from when I was on tour with Lightning Beat-Man somewhere in Holland. Some guy in the crowd wore a wrestling mask and he and his girlfriend were completely stoned from some psychedelic drugs. In the middle of a song, I went into the crowd and started fighting with him—some sort of show fight, you know. He went for it, too, and got the joke, but his girl didn't! She took it seriously because she was tripping, and she attacked me, started punching and kicking me. Anyway, she broke my nose so it was sort of hanging around under my wrestling mask. And I crawled back on stage and told Robert Butler (bass) that I needed to go to the hospital. All he said was, "Lightning Beat-Man just broke his nose. One, two, three, four!" And on with the show—it was gorgeous!

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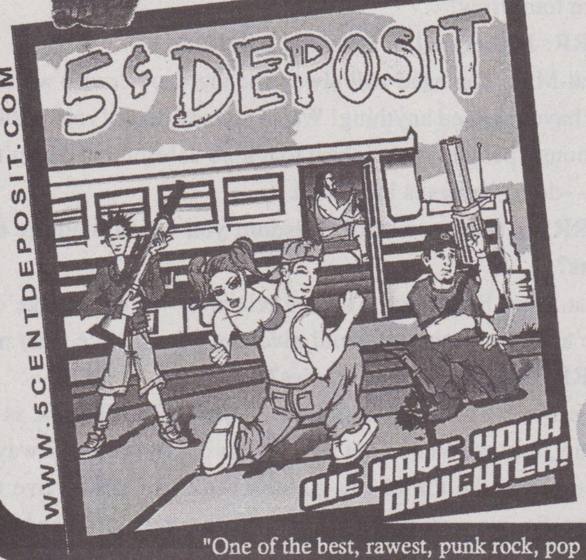
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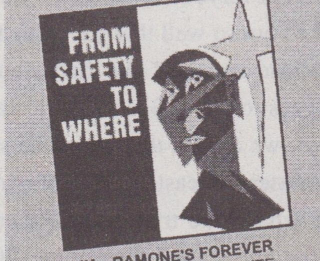
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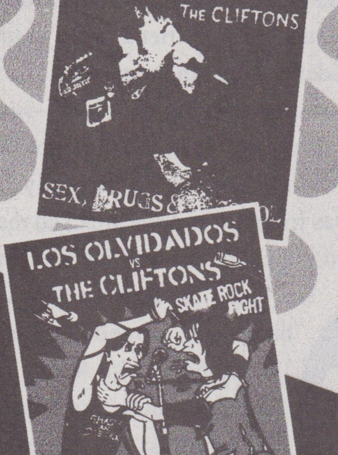
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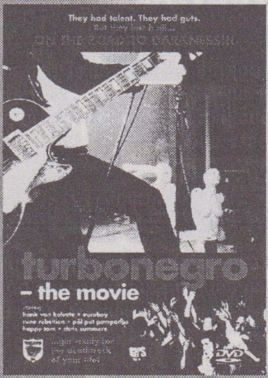
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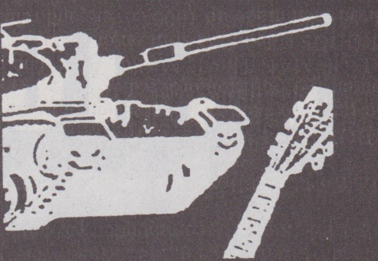

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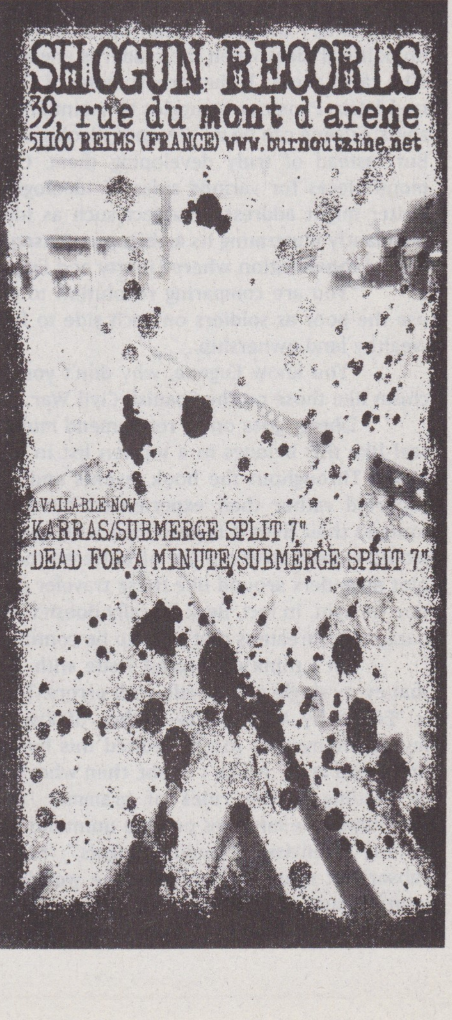

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BOOKS

Yours for the Revolution
by Carissa VanDenBerk Clark

Yours for the Revolution
Carissa van den Berk Clark
202 pages
Bloodlink Books
4434 Ludlow Street
Philadelphia, PA • 19104

Carissa van den Berk Clark's *Yours for the Revolution* is set in the near future where the United States' perpetual war on terrorism has drained the economy to a point approaching collapse. Fifteen-year-old Penelope's family difficulties and threatened conscription into the army lead her to seek out new companions and ideologies, chiefly through punk and anarchism. After Penelope leaves home and hooks up with new pals Eugene and Liberty, the three tour the country, bringing hope to the masses in ridiculously oversimplified situations such as when white teenager Eugene helps organize inner city gangs into an anarchist-style militia: "These gangs fought with one another but soon realized it was not difficult to set aside differences and join together against the police and for the greater good of the community. What was happening in the inner city was simply amazing." Well, how nice, I can't wait for the near future!

Clark's exuberance for sharing ideas around punk, gender, and revolutionary struggle is clear. But a novel is only a good way to bring up political ideas when the reader is engaged in the lives of characters s/he cares about. To her credit, none of Clark's characters is an idealized hero; Penelope struggles to maintain a sense of self in relationships, Eugene can be an arrogant ideologue, Liberty has control issues. But instead of truly developing them, Clark has primarily created mouthpieces for various sides of ideological debates. A more adept writer might address a subject such as ideology-backed violence by poignantly illustrating its ambiguous consequences. But Clark sets up a boring conversation where Liberty and Eugene harangue each other:

"You are comparing revolution to war. War is when the rich use the poor as soldiers on each side to fight against each other, for wealthy land ownership..."

"You know Eugene, why don't you read a real book on anarchism like those on the Spanish Civil War..."

Liberty goes on to recommend multiple movements to study. I feel like this belongs in a top-ten list in a zine, not as dialogue in a novel. Throughout the book, events and ideas have an air of being reported rather than experienced by the characters. When death touches their lives it is described with about as much emotion as one would expend over a piece of buttered toast falling on the floor. The plot meanders around like these traveler punks, with no real destination in sight. In fact, Berk literally doesn't end the novel. The very last paragraph threatens that it is "to be continued."

But I think my biggest issue with *Yours for the Revolution* is that every single page is rife with errors. The front cover boasts that it is "Edited by Anonymous—Author of Evasion." Well, I'd be keeping myself anonymous too if I edited this book. If in fact this book was proofread at all, which I doubt, then what Comrade Anonymous is best at evading is the rules of grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Sometimes the mistakes provide unintentional comic relief—it's entertaining to envision "media Mongols," "hoping the freight trains," or "absorbent rents." When Penelope wonders "if all our work was in vein," I laughed, thinking, "Not unless you spent your entire paycheck on heroin and injected it." Sometimes multiple mistakes converge within a couple of sentences such as in the nonsense that follows:

"Have a sandwich," He said. I sniffled and whipping my tears, then rose my head and said,

"I can't eat,"

One particularly low point was when I encountered the word "brang" being used in as the past tense of "bring." Say what you want about how spelling, etc. shouldn't matter, but the fact is all these mistakes get in the way of the text because they become all that the reader notices. And the mistakes wouldn't bother me so much in a zine, but when you publish a book, you should honor the fact that it is by nature a more lasting format. Now, if you have the time to type all these words and bind them in a fancy color cover, isn't it worth it to wait an extra week or so and have a couple people proofread your manuscript? If you're asking someone to shell out bucks for this and keep it on their bookshelf, don't you want to give it a little more respect? How do you expect people to be won over to your thoughts about revolution in Latin America when you consistently refer to Emiliano Zapata as "Emilio Zapato" and spell the country of Colombia as "Columbia"? As a reader, your sloppiness forces me to not take you seriously, which is unfortunate.

The best thing about DIY/independent publishing is that it allows uncensored thoughts and ideas to come into the world. That can also be its biggest drawback. As a reviewer for MRR, I've had the privilege of reading some amazing, inspiring books over the years—*Venus Drive*, by Samuel Lipsyte, and *Reclaiming San Francisco*, edited by Chris Carlsson, come to mind. But too often books are sent in for review by people who take advantage of DIY publishing to get lazy with their writing standards. DIY publishing is about taking control of production. When we put out books independently we should make them great so that more readers seek out more independent books. That means avoiding diatribes, leaving out cliched plots and language, not publishing what is basically your diary as a book, remembering that revision is one of the most important parts of writing, and at the very least, spell-checking and proofreading your work. Now that I brang this up, I hope Carissa van den Berk Clark's second novel will demonstrate a little more effort than her first.

—Melissa Klein

ABSOLUTELY ZIPPO

Absolutely Zippo
Robert Eggplant
Benny & Son

The first half of this zine had me laughing so bad, I really thought I would vomit. After the first half, the fun ends.

With almost illegible scene reports, poems, comics, and other less easily defined "writings," *Zippo* does an amazing job of giving a history of (mainly) the East Bay/Oakland punk rock scene from 1988, ending in 1998. The first few years of *Zippo* were defined by a group of punk thugs, who Eggplant (the editor), let have free reign over the content of the mag. Lots of free-form punk rock shit-talking, which helped spawn the SF vs. Oakland war, weird drawings of hardcore ants, and great writing by Aaron (Skrub) Cometbus help make this one of the more unique and personal fanzines to ever come out of the Bay Area.

The only downside to the first half of the *Zippo* book is that it is so East Bay centered. It is comprised of dozens and dozens of pages of insider jokes. I think it's fucking amazing, seeing all the old punks as children and hearing about the bands that folks were in before they sold out. But, unless you are a serious East Bay-phile or were involved in punk fifteen years ago and can understand some crazy punk humor, I can't tell you to buy this sometimes amazing zine collection. —Jake Filth

For a change, the next half of this zine is going to be reviewed by me, a newcomer to the East Bay. And as was said before, there are a lot of inside jokes I didn't necessarily get, but that's not a bad thing. I looked at it as a peek into what the scene was like back in the day. It seemed to me that the punk scene really had something going back then and things were fun and new, before it got so serious. Lots of fucked-up layouts, pages cut off in the middle of words, really bad spelling and grammar, total punk rock shit. This is a good thing. I liked Skrub's little ramblings of his travels and the weird and cool people he met—pretty entertaining. Eggplant does a lot of writing in the last part, some interesting and some get kinda boring. A lot of it tends to be about the displacement a lot of us feel in this world and how punk rock music and the community that surrounds it helps to give us some feeling of belonging.

It made me feel a little nostalgic for what all was going on with the punk scene in the early 90s. I was a youngster back then and unfortunately missed out on a lot of shit, but this zine brings it back to you in a way and kind of makes you miss stuff you never got to experience. I may make this zine seem a lot better than it actually is but I think that if you were around during the *Zippo* years then, you should pick this up for old-times' sake. Since there are a lot of comics and short little essay type shit, it makes for good bathroom reading material too. —Shannon

Legalize This! the case for decriminalizing drugs
Douglas Husak
Practical Ethics series editor: Colin McGinn

Legalize This! The Case for Decriminalizing Drugs

Douglas Husak
Verso, 180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4606
$18.00 • 197 pages

Despite the suggestively aggressive title of this book, the author is no Abbie Hoffman or Timothy Leary of the new millennium. Neither is this book a new version of the infamously drug-addled *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas.* Instead, this book is a sober (pun intended) look at the moral, factual, and philosophical reasons behind the growing movement towards the legalization of illegal drugs in the US and across the globe. Author Douglas Husak is a professor of Philosophy and Law at Rutgers University.

Professor Husak begins, in true philosopher form, by examining what the proper questions to be asked are. Instead of asking "Should illicit drug use be legalized," he says, we should be asking "Should illicit drug use be criminalized." Since the government and society nominally believes in justice and freedom, any criminal punishment (which by definition is the state restricting an individual's freedom) must be justified.

"If we lack a good reason to punish drug users, their punishment is unjust, and our punitive drug policies are unjustified." (p. 178)

For most of *Legalize This!* he metaphorically asks prohibitionists to justify why the current "War on Drugs" should continue, and whether or not it's philosophically, factually, or morally defensible. His clear and breakthrough point, which I believe is the most important one he offers, is that it is not up to legalization advocates to justify legalization, it's up to prohibitionists to justify criminalization, since we live in a society that is dedicated to justice and freedom.

He plows through the definitions of what a "drug" is—he finds them very imprecise and borderline useless, especially when the definitions include references to drugs being illegal solely if a law states that they are. Such a legal self-definition has no relation to the scientific definitions, of which there are many. He also examines the differences between medical and recreational use. He dives into the muddy definitional waters by comparing drugs used to treat a disease or an illness (generally major health problems, often life-threatening), a syndrome or a disorder, to drugs used recreationally. One example he uses is Uprima—a new psychoactive drug which is much more successful than Viagra—which is used to treat the syndrome of erectile dysfunction. Though Uprima treats a medical condition, is erectile dysfunction really equitable to a drug that cures cancer or glaucoma? And since it's used by older men who are past their main reproductive age whose motivation is to use it for recreational sex, isn't it a drug used recreationally? Therefore, why is it legal and other sex-enhancing substances illegal? Though I think he gets a bit nit-picky in parts of this section, he is a philosophy professor, so I guess it's understandable.

Husak hits his stride in Chapter Two, where he takes prohibitionists' arguments for prohibition and methodically destroys them—as much as he can from his position on the other side of the question. I would like to read a back and forth between Husak and a knowledgeable prohibitionist trade chapters (or even paragraphs) in the same book, maybe that's an idea for the future. He seems to be thorough, and really goes into depth when he examines "Drugs and Immorality," as one might expect.

He also covers "Drugs and Children," "Drugs and Crime," and "Drugs and Health." This last one is especially hard-hitting, comparing the annual death tolls from licit drugs and activities to those of illicit drugs. Alcohol, tobacco, and obesity kill approximately 100,000, 430,000 and 300,000 respectively annually, while all illicit drugs directly or indirectly cause 25,000 deaths a year. Indirect deaths are due to the current illegality of drugs, for instance drug-related shootings and HIV deaths from dirty needles (which is proven to be easily fought through needle exchange programs, most of which operate only quasi-legally). Most of these deaths being used to justify the "War on Drugs" are directly related to the existence of a "War on Drugs" and not the direct effects of the substances themselves. The direct deaths caused by illicit drugs, including overdose cases and drugged driving crashes, are much lower, possibly as little as a quarter of the total 25,000 dead. Of course, prescription drugs are now thought to kill about 100,000 a year, but I'm not lumping that statistic with the other three legal killers mentioned above because it's as muddy a statistical swamp as the illicit drug numbers.

In Chapter Three, Husak examines the current prohibitionist state of the US and the world, and details what the problems are and how they are not being solved by a continuing prohibition of recreational drug use.

He defines decriminalization a little less broadly than I or many readers of *MRR* would like, concentrating mainly on decriminalizing recreational drug use, not drug manufacturing and distribution. Eventually he considers what would occur after both drug use and drug production are legalized. He generally rejects prohibitionists' dire forecasts of a post-legalization future, although he fully accepts that neither pro-legalization or pro-prohibition forces can honestly or accurately project a future more than one or two years down the road.

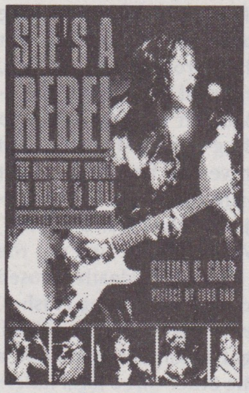
He winds up this fast read with an interesting divergence from other legalization advocates. He suggests that instead of engaging in "cost-benefit analysis" (aka "harm reduction"), legalization advocates should instead concentrate solely on showing that the entire system is unjust. Philosophically, the cost-benefit analysis is unprovable for either side since it is based on value judgments of what different effects of the prohibition are good or bad. For instance, is "euphoria" or "pleasure" a positive or a negative? It depends on your personal and social/religious outlook. Additionally, the whole idea of a cost-analysis approach shrinks when compared to the huge body of unjustly conceived and unjustly applied laws that surround the "War on Drugs."

An easy comparison is the fight over the death penalty in the US: Many anti-capital punishment advocates point out that innocents are being executed and that there are incompetent lawyers and grandstanding politicians permeating in the US death penalty system. Other advocates, including myself, state that the death penalty itself is morally unjust. Even if you fixed the legal system and kept hang 'em high windbags in Washington out of the system completely, folks like me believe that the death penalty is still an unjust method of punishment. When it comes to decriminalizing illicit drugs, I recognize that some cost-benefit analysis is useful—especially in the current recession—but I agree that the overriding problem is the injustice of the current prohibition.

His post as a Doctor of Philosophy saturates this book, down to the lecture hall language of "How should we evaluate this rationale?" and "In this chapter I will critically discuss possible good answers to the basic question." This logical progression of questions and answers melded onto a prose outline is completely logical in a classroom setting. It doesn't work as well in book form, no matter how clearly it lays out his arguments and counter-arguments. Still, this is the only stylistic drawback to this otherwise readable book.

Most leaden textbook prose puts me to sleep, but this is written with a light enough touch to make it well worth picking up. There are a ton of facts and statistics here as well—I've only scratched the surface in this review. This is a good book for legalization advocates as well as prohibitionists since it challenges both camps to examine their reasoning and philosophies. Heck, if someone can't stand a little illumination of his or her beliefs, those beliefs might not be as strong as they seem, right?

—Jesse Luscious



She's a Rebel:
The History of Women in Rock and Roll
Expanded 2nd Edition
Gillian G. Gaar
126 pages • $19.95
Seal Press • no address

I hated this book. Hate, hate, hate, hate, hate. I don't care about the Spice Girls. I don't care about The Breeders or how they met. I don't care about Lilith Fair and I don't care about Tori Amos or Sheryl Crow. I barely care about L7, and I sure as hell don't care about Courtney Love and Kate Bjelland arguing over who "invented" the baby-doll look. But that's what the new, expanded chapters to *She's a Rebel* cover.

It was awful—having to read it, I mean. At least they didn't send me the entire book for review. *She's a Rebel* was originally released in 1992, and Seal Press is just now releasing an expanded second edition that covers music since then. All I received for review were the new chapters, and I'm not sure if that's a curse or a blessing: on the one hand, no Runaways or Deborah Harry, but then again, no Helen Reddy or Bonnie Raitt either.

The three new chapters of the second edition cover some indie rock, women's folk music in the 90s, some hip-hop, and women's pop music from the last decade. There was very little to appreciate in what Gaar writes about. Most of the rockin' bands (L7, Hole, and the like) had crappy aspirations to be just like the male-dominated music biz they were trying to break into. Most of the women who were trying to create something outside that system (ie., the women folk musicians) played shitty music. Nothing I could find it in my heart to give a rat's ass about.

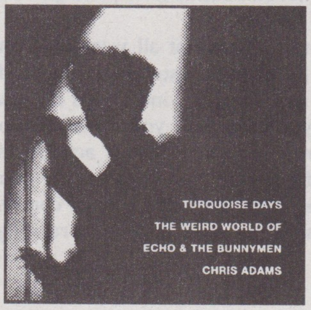
The only exceptions to this were the sections on Riot Grrrls and the rise of Mr. Lady Records. Admittedly, it was a little weird reading Gaar describe how the members of Bratmobile would be introduced to this or that person at a party. And, it was a little weird reading about people from that music scene being described in the same worshipful tones that you'd expect some groupie to use when writing about David Lee Roth. But, almost despite myself, I found those sections to be an interesting read, maybe just because I was never a Riot Grrrl or a lesbian and never saw those scenes from the inside.

But let's not get too positive here. I can't emphasize enough how much I disliked this book. I wanted to like it because almost all history is written from the point of view of a bunch of white guys (like me). But I just couldn't help bristling all over at Gaar's approach. It was annoying that she wouldn't editorialize much in one way or another at any time. She never came out and said that it was great that such-and-such tried to accomplish X, nor did she ever say it was fucked for such-and-such to try to accomplish Y. It was just a collection of details.

I guess I can't fault the accuracy of her research, but even the way the book is organized rubs me the wrong way. Yoko Ono makes bad art and does not belong in a chapter entitled "Punk Revolution." Nor do the Breeders or Throwing Muses belong in a chapter entitled "I Enjoy Being a Grrrl." And, only the question mark makes "Girl Power?" an apt title for a chapter about Britney Spears, Whitney Houston, and Destiny's Child.

I hate this book. Hate, hate, hate. I only had to read a little over a hundred pages of it, and it was still agonizing. And, before you get fooled into thinking that the early chapters may have some redeeming value, I asked around and heard that those suck too (except the chapter on women in rockabilly). My vote—don't buy this book, don't check it out at the library, don't even make eye contact.

—Doug Grime



Turquoise Days
Chris Adams
320 pages • $18.00
Soft Skull Press • 71 Bond St. • Brooklyn, NY 11217
www.softskullpress.com

Let me state my lack of credentials at the outset: in all my years as a music fan and record consumer, I've never intentionally listened to 1980s Liverpool popsters Echo & the Bunnymen. I'm familiar with the imagery, the record covers, the cultural climate that spawned them, and the depressed band-hall teenagers that bought their LPs. Truth to be told, I always dismissed them as a wimpier version of the Cure (who were hardly piledriving heavyweights themselves). Strictly music for cheerleaders. Not everyone shared my biased opinion, though: like most first and even second-string pop acts, the band have rallied a dedicated cult following who support tours, reissues, and VH1 specials. It's at this dedicated audience that *Turquoise Days* is aimed.

It should also be mentioned that the book contains everything you'd ever want to know about the group, and many that you may not care to. It's comprised largely of quotations and clippings from the pages of UK music tabloids like the *NME* and *Sounds*, taken from the band's active years of the late 1970s to middle 1980s. The gained notoriety for sullen post-Doors glooms and chimes and for Ian MacCullouch's stridently self-obsessed public persona and teased 'do. Throughout its length there's a sprightly selection of photos, dates, quotes, graphics, and an exhaustive collection of the band's lyrics. Given their lower-than-low profile these days it's a bold move to put together an edition this size, but one can sense Chris Adam's wide-eyed fanaticism and enthusiasm. He's a fan: I can relate to the impulse, if not the subject matter.

One overwhelming leitmotiv that makes itself felt in *Turquoise Days* is that, despite their hip credentials and post punk background, the Bunnymen and MacCullouch in particular were pop stars. Rather egomaniacal pop stars, with swollen senses of self-worth. It virtually oozes from the fibers of the page—cautious readers may want to consider wearing gloves. "How many times to you look in the mirror in a day, Ian?" "Constantly."

If you're one of the Bunnypeople, you'll probably revel in the details, tour dates, t-shirt designs, and quotes from the increasingly bitter and beleaguered members of the band. It's certainly an exhaustive effort on the part of Mr. Adams. Consider it a cultural artifact of what was a very, different time (the Reagan/Thatcher Years). Hell, I've got plenty of new wave skeletons in my own closet and I can't afford to throw too many stones. Pass the Aquanet.

— Jeff A. Heermann

The Little Book of Vegan Poems • Benjamin Zephaniah

50 pages • $5.95
AK Press • PO Box 40682
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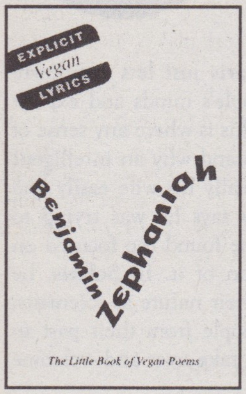

Sadly, this is as frightening as it sounds. If any book could make one reconsider their vegan diet, here it is (as if being "tired all the time" was not a good enough excuse, sellouts). The introduction warns that meat eaters might be offended. I would be more concerned for vegans and those who enjoy poetry. Poetry alone can often provoke a severe fear reaction, but let's put our high school angst behind us (unless you're still in high school, then fucking angst away). These poems are far too straightforward for my taste (which I have to admit is indeed limited) and not witty enough for me to truly enjoy. There are no nuances of imagery, ambiguity, metonymy, or metaphor, unless I am very dense and missing larger and more meaningful implications. As far as poetic elements, there is a bit of personification of cows, dogs, and a table that is made of vegetables, if that excites your poetic appetite.

None of this did much for my appetite. As the title proclaims, this is a short compilation of "humorous" poems about vegan topics, having vegan food in schools, making out with vegans (I agree—that is a good time), not wearing animal byproducts, animal liberation, food (can't shut vegans up about food). Possibly interesting aspects of veganism, but within these pages they are addressed in a cursory manner without an original angle or bite. It would be easy to simply slag these verses because of their unpersuasive qualities and limited appeal, but that would be unfair to Zephaniah (yeah, OK, a little late for niceties).

Zephaniah is a diverse and interesting character. Besides his writing several books of poetry and being a professor of poetry, he has been in two films (in one he played Moses), co-wrote and performed a television play for the BBC, recorded with the Wailers, and works with many organizations for human and animal rights. I wish his diversity and poetic talents awed me more and altered my initial horrified response to the idea of "vegan poetry," which is still fully intact. Reading Lord Byron or Samuel Taylor Coleridge and eating vegan German chocolate cake is a far more satisfying way to combine a vegan lifestyle and poetry. Still, hearing a few of these choice poems delivered by *MRR*'s Jonathan Floyd while listen to Vegan Reich was a divine vegan treat.

—Tobia Jean

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www.sparkplugcomicbooks.com

Artist Dylan Williams, creator of the *Reporter* series, started Sparkplug Comic Books as a way to publish his own comics (after facing frustration with others publishing his work) as well as a space to publish artists he admired. Not expecting to make a career of it, Williams is taking a slow start, with just three titles so far in the Sparkplug family. They are *Reporter Little Black*, *Fleep*, and *Orchid* (an anthology of various comic artists adaptations of Victorian era stories).

Jason Shiga, a mathematician turned comic artist, has been making comics since 1996. He received a grant a while back and self published Double Happiness, a lengthy graphic novel set in Chinatown, and he makes "Choose Your Own Adventure" graphic novels (hot damn!) Shiga combines a simple drawing style (bold lines, shading, and a lighthearted looking character) with logic-problem style text to create *Fleep*. In this comic, originally published in serial form in *Asian Week* (though it was canceled after 24 weeks), a man walks into a telephone booth, closes the door, then blacks out. When he wakes up he finds that the phone booth is enclosed by cement—he is trapped. It is from here that Jimmy Chu, through a string of deductions, must figure out what has happened. What seems far-fetched at first turns into an intriguing mystery. Jimmy uses complex math problems to calculate how much air he has left to breathe, drinks his own pee, devises an escape plan with the few things found in his pockets, and attempts to teach himself Simbanese, the language of the island of Simbia. As the story progresses, a frantic overture of self-revelation erodes into self-doubt. The seemingly basic premise of this comic, with its stark locale, actually makes for a thoroughly entertaining cerebral story.

In a matte green perfect-bound book, Dylan Williams brings us *Little Black*, a collection of out-of-print stories, as well as two new stories, from his ongoing series Reporter. At 80 pages, this slim volume is accompanied by the mini-zine *Notes till Feb. 1956*, which summarizes the *Reporter* story line and introduces us to the cast of characters featured in the comic.

Set in the small town of Willoughby in the mid 1950s, a slew of dapper young men and slick tomboyish women pepper the spooky landscape, along with a crazy haunted doll thing, some fucked up-looking bandaged dudes, and Sloth—the avenging kung fu master. Behind the slow sleepy town, a sinister plot is being concocted by the bandaged dudes and the weird doll to create a perpetual motion machine, win some pendant, and fuck with the other folks in town.

In this collection of stories, most of the wilder characters are in the background, with the more romantic, occasionally banal characters telling their stories. We are introduced to Adam, the hopeful reporter new to town. He writes sci-fi stories for pleasure and newspaper articles for a living. Adam moves to town, gets a job, and meets a girl. Sylvia seems modern and hip for the small town—she works at the newspaper and appears to have taken a liking to Adam. Ivar, a manic dude who writes down everything he sees, is heartbroken and looking for the meaning of life. Also included are small interactions with other townsfolk: kids stealing records, husbands cheating on wives, women drinking in bars. Williams effectively portrays a small town and its population—though they seem boring at times, these small stories are key to the creation of a believable fictional town.

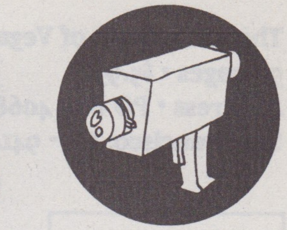
Most of the interactions in *Little Black* take place inside diners, haunted houses, apartments, and a newspaper office. Part science fiction, part pulp novel, a lot of information is packed into these short comics. The drawing style varies from tight compact caricatures to wafting charcoal images. Williams utilizes small frames and stark contrasts to create the shadowy landscape of a mid 1950s upstate New York.

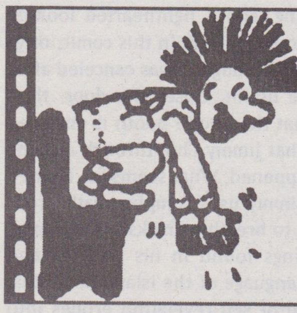
Without having read the series itself, I felt interested in these characters, but not invested. The roving cast allows one to feel a connection with the town, but a more coherent timeline, or even an entire anthology, might lend to a more cohesive and enjoyable story. Nonetheless, Williams has created a fascinating imaginative world of characters, reminiscent of Richard Sala's frightening lurking comic style, matched with the distinct imagery of mid-century comics.

Sparkplug Comics has a good selection so far, with a keen eye for interesting and unique artists.

—Sara Double-Ears

MOVIES





BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

FROM RUSSIA TO MOTOWN

You know when you do something really embarrassing, it's hard to admit it? I went to see the remake of **Solaris**. Granted, I snuck in to the theater, but still I sat through it—George Clooney's naked, made-up and beautifully lit butt and all. Sometimes you can't explain why you do certain things—you just do. Half the audience left during the movie. It is that bad. My boyfriend Mike and I stayed. The scene started to get surreal. How could we leave? Then when the movie finished and "Directed by Steven Soderbergh" came up on the screen, I booed, causing the remaining ten moviegoers to erupt in giggles. You got to have fun with what you got.

Seeing the remake of **Solaris** made me wonder why anyone would bother. I immediately think that Hollywood probably didn't get it so my curiosity takes over and I'm off to see the original **Solaris**. Luckily for me, the best theater in San Francisco, The Castro, was having a Tarkovsky fest. Another positive service resulting from a terrible remake. The original version, made in 1972 by Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky, is twice as long. Although all the stuff that Soderbergh left out makes the film more coherent; it really drags at the same parts. I guess Soderbergh got some of it.

Solaris opens with psychologist Kris Kelvin walking around a lake. Enjoying a peaceful stroll. His father arrives with some government people who want Kelvin to take on a mission to the space station at Solaris in order to find out what is going on there. Solaris is an energy field that may be a planet the scientists at the space station are trying to figure out. The government man shows Kelvin and his parents a film of a meeting with a military pilot who flew over Solaris as part of a search party when another pilot disappeared. The pilot claims to have seen a man on Solaris. The people conducting the meeting do not believe him, claiming he was suffering from hallucinations due to the atmosphere and the close proximity to Solaris. The pilot, now much older-looking, is still troubled by what he saw and seems to be taking a special interest in getting Kelvin to prove that he is not crazy.

Kelvin arrives at the space station and no one is around. He walks around the station cautiously checking things out. There is some blood on the floor that he examines, but continues on. In the remade Solaris, this is my favorite scene. It points out what a truly bad actor George Clooney is. His emotional interpretations of annoyance, curiosity, anxiety, and fear are all the same blank stare. It was quite funny. Russian actor Donatas Banionis is thankfully much better. Kelvin eventually finds Dr. Snauth, one of two remaining people on the station. Snauth won't really explain what is going on, but he informs Kelvin that his friend Dr. Gabarian has killed himself. The remaining scientist, Dr. Sartorious, won't even leave his room at first.

All this is a great setup, but then **Solaris** just lets me down. Solaris is so advanced it is able to read people's minds and exploit them. Kelvin's dead wife suddenly appears. This is where any sense of interest for me goes away. It's hard to understand why an intelligent man who is aware that this woman is not really his wife easily and quickly accepts her into his life. Tarkovsky says he was trying to humanize **2001: A Space Odyssey**, which he found too focused on technology as opposed to people's perception of it. In **Solaris**, he ignores the fact that these men should, by their nature as scientists, want to figure out what is causing these people from their past to appear. Instead, they allow their emotions to take over and welcome the aliens into their lives.

Solaris is slow. At just under three hours, it is not for everyone. I enjoy long movies, but even this one was making me doze. There is one scene, after Kelvin is convinced to go to Solaris, that seems totally useless. The pilot is driving home. Tarkovsky shows the car driving on the freeway for at least five minutes. Tarkovsky enjoys showing small details in his films, but this isn't even nicely shot. All I could think is that possibly in 70s Russia no one had ever seen a highway before, but to a girl in '00 USA, I've seen more than my share.

My curiosity, however, is still not sated. There has to be more. Either I am a masochist or just stupid. I go to see three more Tarkovsky films. **Andrei Rublev** is next. Seeing this three hour and 45 minute film after my experience with **Solaris** doesn't seem like a good idea, but hey, what the hell? It is kind of appealing to know that this film was banned in the Soviet Union.

Andrei Rublev is the story of the Russian 15th century religious painter of the same name. The film follows his life as it eventually influences his painting. Even though Rublev is a monk, he comes across as somewhat of a rebel. Rublev leaves his monastery to go to Moscow to paint for the prince. Along the way he encounters unfamiliar people who reshape his perception of religion and form his way of painting.

The first encounter is with a jester. Three monks, Rublev, Kirill, and Daniil, get caught in the rain. The come across a barn with many poor people drinking beer and having fun. They ask if they can shelter from the rain. When the rain stops, Daniil announces it is time to move on. Soldiers arrive and arrest the jester. It appears Daniil has turned in the man in. Rublev is bothered by this and is the only one to thank the group for letting them stay.

Later Rublev encounters a group of pagans celebrating. They are running around naked and having sex. Rublev is intrigued, presumably since he's never seen a naked woman. He follows them and is caught by a few of the men. He tries to claim ignorance, but the men mock him and tie him to a post in a barn as if he is being crucified. They leave him, threatening that they will kill him in the morning. Later a girl arrives. She explains to him what is going on and argues with him about love. She frees him. The next day Rublev sees soldiers arrest her.

I love subjects that I know nothing about and a Russian religious painter would be way down my list of things to learn. But Rublev's need to question authority and do what he thinks is right even within a religious environment is interesting. The Russian Prince orders Rublev to paint a cathedral with the Last Judgment where all the sinners will be punished and sent to hell. Rublev can't bring himself to do it so instead he paints a more hopeful scene. When he has given up painting for good, he encounters a boy who knowing nothing about bell-casting, other than that was his father's profession. The boy casts a bell for the prince. After he succeeds, the boy confesses his ignorance to Rublev. Rublev finds he wants to paint again.

The other two Tarkovsky films I saw were **Ivan's Childhood** and **The Mirror**. I won't go into them since I am sure only two people would care. However, both are worth seeing. I don't want you to jump to the wrong conclusion if all you've seen is **Solaris**.

Heading back to a time I understand, **Standing in the Shadows in Motown** tells the story of the musicians who played on all the early Motown records. It starts, appropriately enough, with the filmmakers interviewing people in record stores who claim to know about music. When asked if they know who played guitar on the Marvin Gaye albums, they have no idea. This sets up the film to introduce you to the musicians.

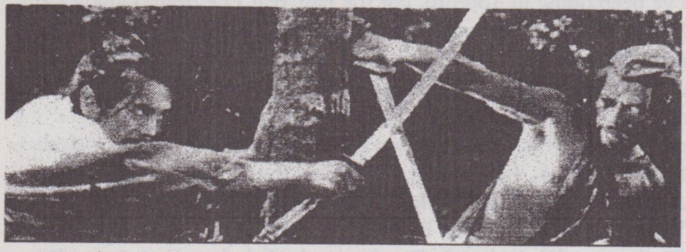
I am surprised at the attitude of the film. There doesn't seem to be any resentment towards the success of the singers or Barry Gordy, the head of Motown. If I had created a famous guitar riff and everyone associated it with Marvin Gaye, I'd probably be a little pissed off. Instead, it seems like the group known as The Funk Brothers are just happy to be getting any recognition.

The best part of **Standing in the Shadows in Motown** is seeing the Funk Brothers go back to the studio were they recorded all their Motown songs and reminisce about what happened back then. Everyone still considers Gordy a genius for getting everyone together and using the best musical talent Detroit had to offer on the label's recordings. The band was worked hard, but it seems that they were paid well for their work. It's just the recognition thing, and maybe that Gordy suddenly packed up the studio and moved to LA without telling the musicians. I have a hard time figuring out who deserves credit for the songs. The Funk Brothers didn't write any of the songs, but I know from experience that the musicians affect how the song turns out. Just think of how many aging punk bands have reformed with new members. The songs are recognizable, but you can always tell there is something lacking.

Unfortunately, the interview footage of **Standing in the Shadows in Motown** is interspersed with a reunion concert. This is where you get to see the other end of my argument. Hearing a song you've heard a hundred times sung by Chaka Khan is pretty painful.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by email at carolynmrr@juno.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



ADVANCED DEGREES IN PROFILING

While the Jewish Holocaust has been described from many points of view, often what remains with us is a single vast historical tableau. In **The Pianist**, Roman Polanski (**Chinatown, Death and the Maiden, The Ninth Gate**) attempts (and for the most part succeeds) in giving us a new angle on this familiar story. Now, the issue isn't so much of extermination as of survival.

The Pianist is solidly based on a memoir of concert pianist Warsav Szpilman, a Polish Jew whose survival story would carry him to the ripe age of 88. In 1939, when German tanks begin rolling into Poland, Szpilman is a gentle aesthete with a well-tempered optimism; when mortar fire blasts a hole into his recording studio, he continues playing, as if music was the imperative and his safety a given. It's an optimism that survives a parade of armored Nazi vehicles under his window; the German governing authority assures the populace that they will be completely "secure"—though who could expect to be secure would only be known later.

He puts on a good show when he's not allowed into his local coffee house with his German girlfriend, relocating his blithe romance to the cobbled streets. However, he begins to see the writing on the wall when new decrees start dropping like bombs. Jews must wear armbands or be subject to punishment; what's more, they must endure the humiliation of sewing the armbands themselves. Soon, his father is beaten by soldiers simply for walking on the sidewalk. Eventually, all Jews must surrender their apartments and relocate to a slum, and from there to an over-packed ghetto. When he sees an old Jewish man attack an equally old woman on the street, then lap her gruel from the sidewalk, the portents could not be more grim. On this filthy boulevard all are left to die—and wait for the trains headed for Treblinka.

Szpilman himself narrowly escapes a berth on the train, but for all intents and purposes this is the true beginning of the film. Dependent on a network of German activists, he begins a fugitive existence that will last not months, but years. A piano in his apartment is a cruel temptation; the only way he can play is by nervously hovering his fingers above the keyboard.

But Szpilman's desperate situation is only a reflection of what's happening outside his window, and beyond the familiar, deserted street he watches every day. He climbs a stone wall to the former Jewish quarter. The camera follows him over a dismal and surreal landscape of hollowed, smoking buildings and stacked piles of rubble as far as the eye can see. The Jewish Holocaust has flipped denominators and become a German Holocaust, an inhospitable locus of famine and disease. Although one never loses sight that this is a movie, the drama suddenly becomes more hyper-real.

Roman Polanski is smart enough to be honest with his material. As with Marcel Ophuls' landmark documentary, **The Sorrow and the Pity, The Pianist** doesn't flinch when it comes to showing the role of Jewish collaborators with the Nazis—men every bit the survivor as Szpilman, albeit without his talent or resources.

The spell of reality is broken occasionally by the dialogue; the Jewish characters speak English (with an anachronistic British accent), while the Germans talk in German (with subtitles). It's the same convention Steve Spielberg used in **Schindler's List**, except **The Pianist** has much more unique material, and one tends to accept it almost as a documentary. Filmed with a palate of faded colors, this arresting film has a pacing and mood that's decidedly close to real life.

Rabbit-Proof Fence tells a similar story that happened at about the same time. In 1931, West Australian legislators passed the Aborigines Act, which commanded that all mixed-race children would be shipped to the Moore River Native Settlement for re-education. The theory, as advanced by its administrator, A.O. Neville (Kenneth Branagh), was that the nation was unprepared for any ambiguity in the race issue; so, the mixed-race children's aboriginal identity would be changed with a good Christian indoctrination.

The idea was that blackness could be completely bred out of the children in a few generations, so that everyone would be white (or at least whitish). A gentler kind of genocide.

Aussie director Phillip Noyce, more accustomed to making Hollywood blockbusters (**Patriot Games, Clear and Present Danger**), returned to his homeland to direct this decidedly uncommercial project. Based on a true account, **Rabbit-Proof Fence** is set in the 1930s, in the South Australian state of Jigalong.

A.O. Neville's apparent notion of a proper homestead was one in which children would frequently be used as free labor, a small town controlled by nuns and assisted by talented aborigine tracker (whose own child has been abducted). If you misbehave badly, you might spend the day bawling in a corrugated metal shack in the unforgiving Australian sun.

That the full-blooded aborigines weren't deemed to be worth redeeming is well past being ironic today; but amazingly, the offending law wasn't even revoked until 1971. **Rabbit-Proof Fence** is the account of three small children who want to escape Moore River and make their way through 1500 miles of brush, rock, and desert to get back home again.

On their capture, a padlocked police van drives the three children to a place that's nothing if not a small concentration camp. Fourteen-year-old Molly Craig (Everlyn Sampi) and her young cousins Daisy and Gracie (Tianna Sansburn, Laura Monaghan) find themselves in an open air encampment with dozens of children roughly their age—all orphans, save them.

It's hard for the children to escape the scepter of implicit racism behind their keepers' smiles. Children with lighter skin are immediately transferred to special placement and training; the ones left behind sleep on cheap spring cots, survive on starchy white stew, and are taught about the one true God in their very own whitewashed church. Nuns hover everywhere to mete punishment when deserved.

Molly convinces her two cousins to escape just before a rainstorm, when their tracks would be impossible to find. She turns out to be inventive in the most unanticipated ways. She's also exceedingly lucky, finding food and support from basically good-hearted people, and even making a wrong turn that befuddles their trackers.

Like **The Pianist**, this is a straightforward social drama that changes early on to become an unnerving story of survival. Mr. Neville (playfully called "Mr. Devil" by the aborigine children), fearing the situation will get out of hand, marshals the talents of local police in the manhunt. Amazingly, impossibly, the three children seem to have dissolved into the landscape—a flat, hot, rocky world that often seems like a desert.

Internationally celebrated cinematographer Christopher Doyle, a veteran of the Hong Kong movie scene (**Chungking Express, In the Mood for Love**), captures the Australian outback in such a variety of tones that the visuals become ever more fascinating as the narrative progresses. For his part, director Noyce pushes the story to the very edge of where emotion can turn to sentiment; in other words, it's edited down with taste.

Also, credit the trio of nonprofessional actors as the young fugitives, whose unaffected performances draw you into their extraordinary survival story.

The film doesn't allow for much elucidation on more delicate points of The Aborigines Act—in particular, how most of the children were orphans and helpless without government assistance. So far as the Act's engineers were concerned, it was the only humane way to bring rejected children back into West Australian culture.

Unfortunately, the only concept of help they could think up was in some ways analogous to the racial engineering experiments of Nazi Germany. The film's title, which is its main metaphor, hints that this legalistic fence all but turned half-aborigine children into animals. No one could know until much later that it would lead to the creation of a Lost Generation—an entirely new social class without a social or racial identity.

When the film was released at Cannes, Aussie politicians were furious at being termed racist. Maybe they're partly right...and then maybe they just don't get it.

Comments? Email me at sjspinali@yahoo.com.

Punk Movie Nights with Jah Dead

Punk Movie Night begins this month with an update on the life and work of filmmaker Jackie Joice, whose film **Punk Pretty** was screened here in one of our first columns. Jackie has literally taken that film around the world, but at the same time she has continued to publish zines, do spoken word, and develop ideas for future film projects. I've remained in contact with here over the last couple of years, and I recently asked her to up date the Punk Movie Nights' readers on her nonstop life.

"Punk Pretty Is Still Bleeding: After almost three years, hell, let's just say three years, **Punk Pretty**, the feminist punk documentary, is still coughing up blood. I never imagined that people would still be interested in screening the underground no budget/low budget video documentary. Recently, **Punk Pretty** was a part of A.A.G.R.O's Dia De Los Muertos Female Art Showcase in Sacramento and San Francisco's Indie Fest Microcinema this passed September. Oh, and it will be available for rental at The Video Underground in Jamaica Plains, MA. College students have requested copies for research purposes.

I am currently working on my next documentary, entitled **Swerdru**. Swerdru is a town in the Eastern region of Ghana, West Africa. "Swerdru" means "carrying medicine." This documentary is still in its pre-production stages. Of course, money is always a factor, but I've learned from my mistakes as far as the art of documentary-making is concerned. **Swerdru** will hopefully be completed by October of next year." To sign up to Jackie Joice's mailing list, go to: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/punkpretty."

We recently held our second Punk Movie Night at Gilman, and although it wasn't a raging success, it was a learning experience. Unfortunately, our Punk Movie Nights aren't a regularly scheduled event at Gilman (which would be nice), but if you are interested in having your underground films or videos screened, then someone you should definitely contact is Bennet in Toronto. Here is a recent update I received from him:

"I thought I'd send you a message to let you know of screenings I've been doing in Toronto. For the past year I've been doing a Punk Movie Night once a month at a space called Kytes which runs a program for street-involved youth that provides counseling and referrals and needle exchange, etc. The screenings are open to anyone, though and they're always free and we serve a vegan meal beforehand for cheap from which the money goes to Kytes. We've shown **Another State of Mind, Instrument, Breaking the Spell, Global Dissent: Anarchist Music and Action, Train on the Brain, Westway to the World, Edge of Quarrel, Beyond the Screams, Decline of Western Civilization III, Ladies & Gentlemen the Fabulous Stains**, and **Born in Flames**, plus a bunch of super 8's made by local kids. And we also did a screening for the Ottawa Ladyfest and hosted a screening in Toronto for the Lost Film Fest. Cheers, Bennet. To get involved with this project, contact: benandzoe@hotmail.com."

I don't usually hype music in this column, but I recently picked up a copy of the IRON LUNG/LANA DAGALES split LP at the UGZ Speed Trials in Richmond, California, and it is a great fucking record. If this had come out in the mid-90s, it would have been hailed as the second coming, but even now it is one of those records that's mandatory listening for any fan of extreme, heavy (Recorded by Dan Rathbun of HIS HERO IS GONE, ARTIMUS PYLE fame) hardcore. Trust me.

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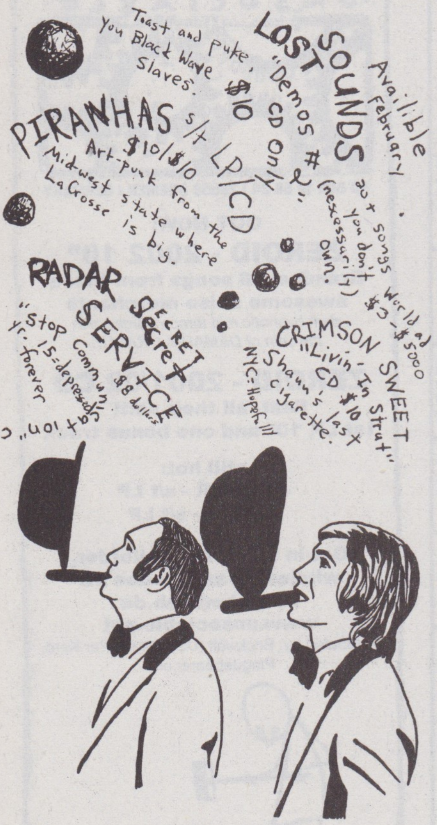

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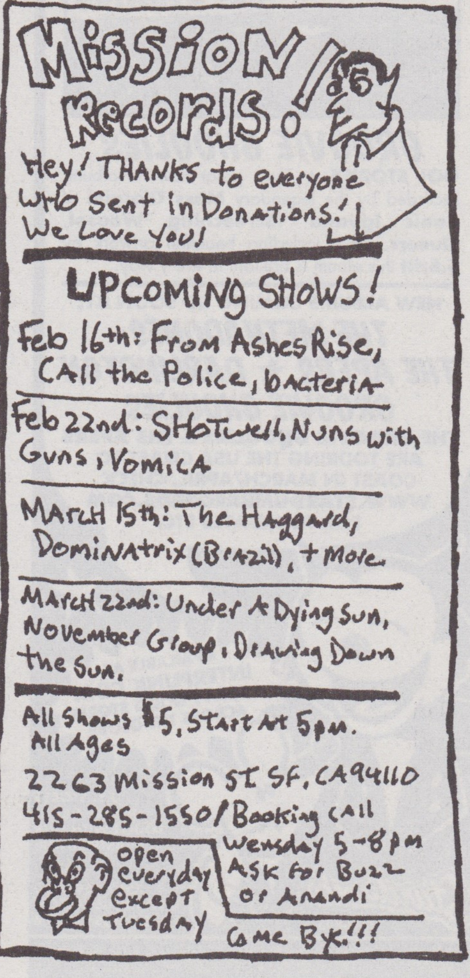

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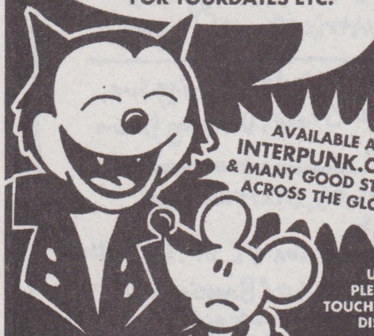

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Exploding Hearts - (Making) Teenage Faces7" $4.00
These guys keep plenty of the Punk attitude and power in their Pop! The B-side is a flat out rocking Punk number with plenty of snarl in the vocals! This is an amazing debut from this Portland band.

urban decay

Urban Decay - There is No Escape CD $13.00
This is some fine and upstanding Punk, its really a shame that none of it has been heard until now. These tracks would have fit nicely on any of the "Punk and Disorderly" compilations! So Stud the jacket, spike the hair and buy the CD!

Snuky Tate - Who Cares 7" EP $4.00
Snuky wrote, played guitar, and sang on this platter on which he enlisted the Mutants to back him up. It's great fuzzed-out mid-tempo punk with flaming guitar solos and Snuky's caterwauling vocals are some of the more distinctive outbursts in rock n roll.

Cock Sparrer - England Belongs to Me 7" $5.00
One of the all time classic Oi! singles from one of the best known and most enduring bands of the genre! The title track and "Argy Bargy" are guaranteed to be stuck in your head for the rest of your life. Nice reproduction of the sleeve, colored vinyl, and a limited pressing.

The Oppressed- The Noise 7" EP $5.00
One of the most outspoken anti-fascist Oi! bands around. On this record they set the politics aside and have some fun! Three great covers of proto-skinhead band Slade!! Hear "Cum On Feel The Noize", "Mama Weer All Crazee Now", and "Gudbuy T'Jane" done Oi! style!

Last Resort - Violence in Our Minds 7" EP $5.00
Four classsic songs of aggro and discontent (including the always cheerful "Violence In Our Minds") released on 7" vinyl for the first time ever! This was the first demo recorded by these notorious hooligans, but it was never released as a single back in the day.

FIRST STRIKE

BC Tapes - First Strike CD $10.00
This CD compiles some of the finest material that they released by U.S. Hardcore bands in 1983. 50 songs from 10 bands, including The Clitboys, Accused, Vatican Commandos and others. Over an hour of great, authentic early 80s HC and Thrash at a very reasonable price.

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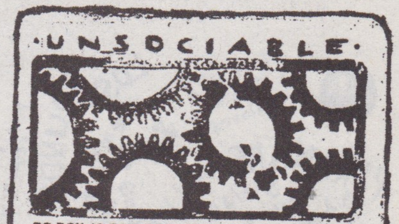

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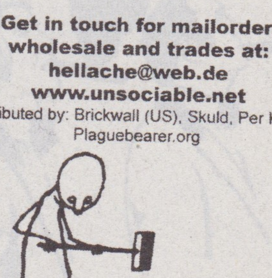

RECORDS

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FROM IDEAL SON
THE FIRST FEW YEARS

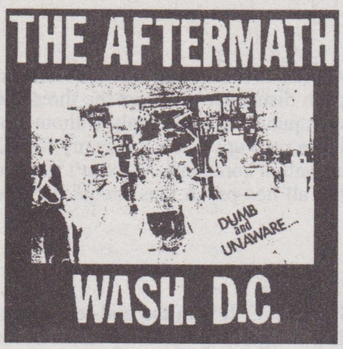
69 CHARGER - "From Ideal Son to Lowlife Scum" CD

These guys have got what it takes: the look, the noodley leads, the gasoline-fueled intensity, the guitar stances, to be considered part of the Camaro Rock genre. And hey, they're pretty good, too. (DP)

(Roulette's, Lijsterstraat 32, 5735 ET Aarle Rixtel, NETHERLANDS, roulettesrecords@hotmail.com)

AFFRAY/TOKEN TANTRUM - split LP

Not sure what to think about AFFRAY. While some of it is solid-charging crust with slow crushing parts mixed in, they put in some weird parts that totally throw me off. Occasionally they use these deeply-sung vocals that sound like they should be part of a really bad metal song. Or they use a keyboard, which totally sounds out of place. I guess they are trying to be cutting edge, but it just sounded lame to me. TOKEN TANTRUM, on the other hand, brings things down to a snail's pace with some serious sludgecore. Fuzzy bass lines, fierce distortion, gargled vocals... not bad to say the least. They throw in these occasional NEUROSIS-style quiet parts, but it tends to build back up nicely. (RC)
(c/o Spaak Wetterlinsgatan, 21B 521 34 Falkoping, SWEDEN, affray@hotmail.com)


THE AFTERMATH
DUMB and UNAWARE...
WASH. D.C.

AFTERMATH - "Wash. DC" EP

These guys go all-out to recreate the early Dischord aesthetic, but you won't find any rehashed "Out of Step" covers on this five-song EP. AFTERMATH play mid-paced hardcore with gruff vocals. Lots of clean guitar work and sing-along parts make me think of NY hardcore much more than early DC stuff. I'd personally prefer to be listening to the VOID/FAITH split, but AFTERMATH's style definitely bring some originality to the table that so many bands trying to recreate the 80s sound lack. Yeah, the salad days are over... (VH)
(Minor Disturbance, PO Box 80112, NE Washington, DC 20018, thereasonisyou@hotmail.com)

AGAINST ME! - "The Disco Before the Breakdown" EP

Well here it is, the follow-up EP to last year's rather amazing *Reinventing Axl Rose* LP. To tell the truth it just doesn't grab me the same (sorry, but the energy that was displayed on said LP just isn't there. The title track is a fairly decent tune that brings to mind later period AMERICAN STEEL or the NEWTOWN NEUROTICS *Suzi* 12" era, but the B-side just seems to be missing something... makes me think BILLY BRAGG-lite. This stuff only works for me when the energy is at 125%, and by their own admission they only gave 35% on this record. (MT)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

AGAINST ME!
THE DISCO BEFORE THE BREAKDOWN

ALL OR NOTHING HC - "Search for the Strength" CD

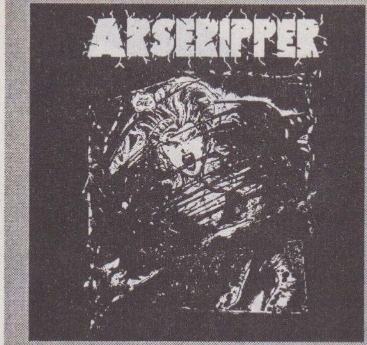
Quick-paced female-fronted hardcore from these Los Angeles punk rockers. Heartfelt, personal, and sincere lyrics layered over well-played and cleanly-produced SoCal hardcore in the same vein as the newer AGNOSTIC FRONT stuff. (MT)
(On The Rag, PO Box 251, Norco, CA 92860-0251, www.ontherag.net)

ANGRY FOR LIFE - CD

This band is composed of ex-members of KRUPTED PEASANT FARMERZ and RED #9, but sounds like a second-rate BAD RELIGION. I must admit, that once I found out who was in the band I was disappointed that this CD wasn't better. It just has no spark, and that isn't good. (JF)
(www.ancestorrecords.com)

ANTISEEN - "Honour Among Thieves" LP

This is ANTISEEN'S debut LP full of piss and vinegar. Featuring the hits: "Queen City Stomp," "Face Full of Teeth," and "Destructo Rock." TKO is doing ANTiSEEN right by re-releasing



Audio Kollaps
ULTIMA RATIO

BESK - What Went Wrong?

all their out of print LPs. This is also a terrific chance for you to pick up classic shit by this crazy, fucked-up band! Thanks TKO. (HM)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #30, Richmond, VA 23221, www.tkorecords.com)

ARSEN AKA KONIG DER MONSTER - "Black Sunday" EP
This is dark, punishing mid-tempo hardcore that follows down a path laid out by many grinding/emo outfits from the mid 90s. Loud, messy guitars, hammering drums, and blood-curdling screams of pain and anger come crashing together, creating quite a release. I am pretty sure the main vocalist is a female, though I do hear some growling male vocals in there as well. Fans of bands like URANUS should take note. (RC)
(React With Protest, c/o Fam, Ulbrich, Vechte Str. 09, 3775 Versmold, GERMANY, koenigdermonster.com)

ARSERIPPER/DEMISOR - split EP
ARSERIPPER, from Australia, weigh in with 15 tracks of semi-competent, heavy, anally-fixated gurgling grind, including a LAWNMOWER DETH cover (wow, haven't heard that band's name in a while). Not too remarkable. DEMISOR, from Singapore, demonstrate far more versatility, throwing in some odd guitar bits that call to mind BRUTAL TRUTH. Much better than I remember them being. Overall, DEMISOR's fast quirky songs make this worth picking up for grind fans. (EL)
(Dry Retch, GPO Box 1200, Hobart TAS 7001, AUSTRALIA, dryretch@primus.com.au)

AUDIO KOLLAPS - "Ultima Ratio" CD
A sheer steamrolling skull-fuck of an album, this is the most punishing new band I've heard in the last couple months. Immediately whetting my curiosity since coming out of nowhere on their excellent split 7" with WOLF BRIGADE, Germany's AUDIO KOLLAPS far surpasses those expectations and delivers a crushing mix of DISCHARGE-d hardcore and full-throttle death metal. One of the finest and most balanced mixes of metal and hardcore, these grizzled ex-RECHARGE chaps still sport spiked hair and studded jackets, but now cross their D-beat riffs with blast beats and old-school 80s fast thrash-y death-metal riffing a la early ENTOMBED or GRAVE. Nothing overtly technical here, just relentlessly powerful tunes from start to finish. Get it. (EL)
(Epistrophy, PO Box 312, 30003 Hannover, GERMANY, www.epistrophy.de)

BBQ - "3 Days/I'm the One"
Great to see more one-man bands popping up. This is Mark Sultan of SPACESHITS and LES SEXAREENOS pumping out some blues-ified garage trash. Lo-fi and rocking. (CK)
(Goodbye Boozy, Via Villa Pompetti 147, 64020 S. Nicolo A Tordino, Teramo, ITALY, goodbyeboozy@tin.it)

BESK - "What Went Wrong?" EP
Fucking puke on my face and call me George if this ain't the punkest thing I've heard all day! Five barnburners ranging from (almost) D-beat madness to crustcore to good old-fashioned fist waving mayhem. Songs about punk stuff like closed-mindedness, greed, and nuclear proliferation (all of these things are bad, in case you're keeping track). I imagine they are the sort of band in their hometown where everyone gets good and fuckin' loaded when they play—I personally would love to get good and fuckin' loaded and see them play. (WN)
(Arson, 112 Montreal St., Kingston, ON, K7K 3E8 CANADA)

BILLY CHILDISH - "25 Years of Being Childish" 3xLP
This contains a representative sampling of the BILLY CHILDISH saga through his work in several bands on a very heavy triple-LP set. The POP RIVITS tunes push distortion well past the threshold of the SICK THINGS, while the MILKSHAKES are more typical psych punk—but definitely without embellishments. THEE MIGHTY CAESARS' "Wily Coyote" is as wild as a rave-up; this is easily my fave CHILDISH incarnation (whereas the lounge tracks may drive you up the wall in boredom). And can't go wrong with the HEADCOATEES's girl-pop tunes. A hit-and-miss affair, but all neo-psych fans should definitely take notice. (SS)
(Damaged Goods, PO Box 671, London E17 9GH, UK)

BLACK EYES/EARLY HUMANS - split EP
BLACK EYES play one song that sounds similar to SHELLAC. It is in the mid-tempo range. The drums and bass play the same thing through the whole song while the guitar goes off by itself for long periods of time. The vocals are a bit monotonous themselves and fall somewhere in between talking and shouting. I'm not sure if I could sit through a full-length record, but as just one song it is pretty good stuff. EARLY HUMANS have two tracks. The first is a bass-heavy hardcore song with lots of changes, distorted, screaming vocals, and high-pitched, discordant guitar parts. The second track is just a bunch of feedback. (PA)
(Planaria, PO Box 21340, Washington, DC 20009)

BLACKOUT TERROR - "The Shortest Distance..." CD
BLACKOUT TERROR is a five piece metal hardcore band from Tampa, Florida. They play straight up metalcore with lots of heavy riffage leading the way while gnarled vocals spew out angry political lyrics. These guys have a lot of that Swedish-style metal influence in their songs, but occasional they will slide in a touch of emo or some intense rapid fire drumming to break the pace up. Solid release. (RC)
(Blackout Terror, c/o The Kids, 4119 Gunn Hwy. #12, Tampa, FL 33624)

BLAZING HALEY/LOS CREEPERS - split EP
LOS CREEPERS are the psychobilly half of this record, with an echoey sound and maniacal laughter, while BLAZING HALEY are closer to regular old rockabilly in the style of REVEREND HORTON HEAT. (DP)
(Split Seven, 12405 Venice Blvd. #265, Los Angeles, CA 90066)

BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS - "Ghoulish Reminders" EP

Four more songs from this Portland band who are starting to become one of my favorites. BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS wear their influences proudly on the back of their jackets, and fans of DISCLOSE, APPENDIX, G.I.S.M., ANTI-CIMEX, DISCHARGE and similar bands will surely not be disappointed. Guns and skulls everywhere, screaming distorted guitars, howled vocals and the nonstop pounding of the drums... perfect! "As day turns to night/Gonna kill cops and nazis/As night turns to day/Rain washes blood from my eyes/night truncheons..." Can I get a hallelujah, motherfucker? (WN)

(Whisper in Darkness, PO Box 40113, Portland, OR 97240-113)

THE BOILS - "Ripping Waters" CD

Here's some rough street punk from Philadelphia. These guys aren't singing about boots, girls, and drinking. Their lyrics are about "our country," "victory," and fighting. They'll be releasing a full album soon and I'm not in the least bit interested. (SR)

(Thorp, PO Box 6786, Toledo, OH 43612, thorpster@prodigy.net)

BREAKER BREAKER - "Out of Service" CD

Above average in your face "modern" hardcore with obligatory breakdowns from this now defunct Bay area band. Six tunes on this adorable little 3" compact disc that all pretty much follow the fast/mosh/mid-tempo formula with "nice guy in pain" vocals. "Exchange Street" is a great hard rocking song, and I find myself strangely pleased that there are no lyrics given, because I think it's a boring "girlfriend dumped me and I'm moving on" song. Their EP on Bridge Nine is a touch better than this release, but fans of that record will like this one as well. (WN)

(Martyr, PO Box 955, Harriman, NY 10926)

CARRIE NATIONS - "Be Still" CD

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank Chris, Hannah, and anyone else involved with Plan-it-X Records. Without you, punk would suck a whole lot more, and I consider it my distinct privilege to review anything you put out. And what better way to cap a year that brought us the THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB LP and the ABE FROMAN and DEVIL IS ELECTRIC CDs than with a band which has clearly been paying close attention to JAWBREAKER, slower PIXIES songs, and the good parts of radio rock? Simply put, CARRIE NATIONS fucking rule. They're lyrics are brilliant, each song has its own corresponding comic, and the vocals are sung beautifully and screamed passionately. Get it get it get it. (MX)

(Plan-it-X, 5810 W. Willis Rd, Georgetown, IN 47122-9117, www.plan-it-x.com)

CAUSTIC CHRIST/INTENSE YOUTH - "Intense Youth" split EP

CAUSTIC CHRIST deliver three tracks of furious Iron City Punk rage (a crushing, driving guitar delivery piled on top of a relentless drum attack combined with Mr. Generic Christ's cynical snarling vocals make them one of the top hardcore bands currently going in the USA! This is hardcore, dear children: angry, bitter, and brutally caustic hardcore. Brilliant. On the flip we have INTENSE YOUTH (who also hail from the City of the Three Rivers) who play a more hectic modern take on the hardcore music... less straightforward and more herky-jerky than their fellow Pittsburghers, but just as powerful nonetheless. Kinda reminds me a bit of ANGEL HAIR's first EP (that's a really good thing in my book). Awesome lyrics to boot! Two more reasons why Pittsburgh has one of the better scenes in the country—fuck all yinz! (MT)

($3.50 ppd: Behold The Youthquake!, PO Box 10223, Pittsburgh, PA 15232, behold_the_youthquake@hotmail.com)

CHARM CITY SUICIDES - "II" CD

Beautiful packaging opens up to a CD that sounds like a couple of twelve-year-olds banging on trashcans in their parents' basement. I ask myself, are they going for a fuzzed-out, chaotic NATION OF ULYSSES sound? Is this the hip new direction of punk? Should I listen through one more time? No—it really sounds like a couple of twelve-year-olds banging on trashcans in their parents' basement. (VH)

(Baths of Power, 48 Glen Alpine Rd, Phoenix, MD 21131)

CHILDREN OF FALL - "Ignition for Poor Hearts" LP

There is definitely some great music here. German hardcore kids play fast and scream loud! Their songs are full of energy and emotion. But when rhythmically pounding drums and melodic guitar work lead to emo breakdowns, I start to feel sick. Most of the songs are unnecessarily longer than three minutes, while the shorter tracks on the records are "Interludes" —which easily translates to "filler." I'd probably be a lot more tolerant if it weren't for the cheesy theme of hearts and chains throughout their artwork. It was a good idea for a few seconds...but that was ten years ago. The pathetic displays of "emo" by the likes of JIMMY EAT WORLD on MTV seem to be a good indication it's time we get over it. Pull out those CIRCLE JERKS records again or, hey, try something new. I know I'm sounding harsh, but it's nauseating. If you like the emo-hardcore thing, you'll probably really get into this record, but I'm keeping my distance. (VH)

(Scene Police, c/o DPM, Humboldtstrasse 15, 53115 Bonn, GERMANY, www.scenepolice.de)

COFFINBERRY - "The Spins" 45

Modish punk played with absolutely no enthusiasm—at least that is my impression listening to this single. Let me tell you something, if you don't sound like you are having fun when playing this style of music, than it makes it almost unbearable to get through three songs. That being said, this band's songs aren't badly crafted—too bad they aren't a college rock band, because they'd fit right in. (JF)

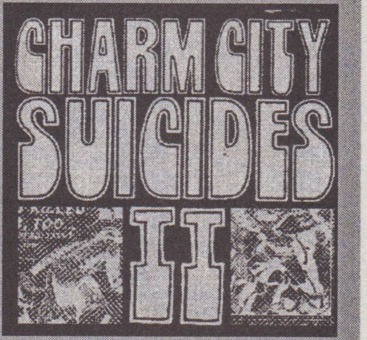
(Exit Stencil, PO Box 110775, Cleveland, OH 44111)

COLLYWOBBLES - "Excellent Barfighters" CD

Too many HELLACOPTERS comparisons here in package design and iron cross wearing, but this is just too slick and contrived to catch me. And COLLYWOBBLES, as a name for a tough guy band? What were they thinking? (DP)

(Deadlock, PO Box 324, 7900 AH Hoogeveen, NETHERLANDS, www.deadlock.nl)

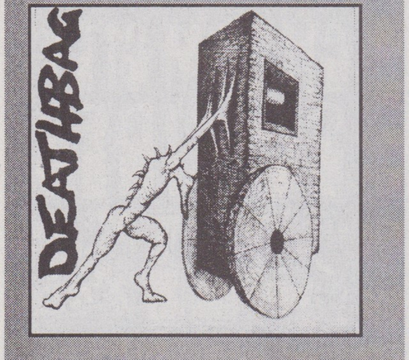
Blazing Haley
Los Creepers

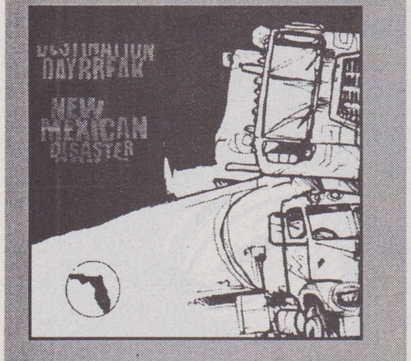


Coffinberry

constricted
A sick and desperate move that drives me

DADDY'S DOLLS
SPOILED PUNK EP





COLT - "Marek" LP

I haven't reviewed a record this melodic in quite a while. A very refreshing experience, indeed. On the whole, COLT thrives on a powerful, melodic sound like a cross between PEGBOY and DINOSAUR JR. (and perhaps a pinch of JAWBREAKER as well.) Either way, it's definitely not a sound being overdone these days. The music is relatively simple, while the vocals do most of the work in making the songs interesting and catchy. There are the quiet, more soft-spoken bits, but COLT is clearly at their best when the heavy soaring guitars kick in. Well recommended. (SP)
(Scene Police, c/o Humboldtstr. 15, 53115 Bonn, GERMANY, www.scenepolice.de)

CONCUBINE FORMING - "Stiff" EP

Four songs of drum-machine powered industro-punk, falling somewhere between BIG BLACK and NOMEANSNO with some metal/grunge swagger. Warped and twisted enough to be interesting. Not bad at all, but I generally prefer a live drummer. (AM)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20196; www.bigneckrecords.com)

CONSTRICTED - "A Sick and Desperate Move That Drives Me" EP

Wow! CONSTRICTED from Japan pound their way through some seriously brutal thrashing punk. Hard-charging tunes that are fast, noisy, and distorted out. One side of the EP was studio and the other side was apparently live. The thing is, it was a really good recording, so it didn't really sound live. And though both sides ripped, in the end I ended up liking the live side more. The recording was heavier and the vocals were deeper and more powerful. Either way though, this one is a ripper! (RC)
(Answer, Hase Bld No. 2B1, 5-49 OSU3 Naka-Ku, Nagoya-City, Aichi 460-0011, JAPAN)

COUNTY Z - "Graveyards and Grocery Carts" LP

I have to admit that most of the recent records by ERRASE ERRATA have not held up to closer inspection. They just sound kinda thin. Luckily, I have this to listen to, these kids are damn good at the loose-jerky punk rhythm thing as recently repopularized by the aforementioned ERRASE and !!! for starters. This LP sounds like it was recorded live, so I think this plus their really great 7" gives me the picture. Instead of trendy synth, the Z-sters work violin into the mix and it works in an Dutch EX kind of way. This LP is highly recommended for anyone who likes their art-punk to be free of...well, crap. (RW)
($6 ppd: Trd World, PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA, 70152)

LOS CRUDOS/REVERSAL OF MAN - split LP

Don't get too excited. What we have here is not new material from CRUDOS or REVERSAL OF MAN. Apparently Ebullition ordered 1000 copies of the CRUDOS/SPITBOY LP and 1000 copies of the REVERSAL OF MAN This Is Medicine LP. The plant screwed up and sent them 1000 copies of an LP with the CRUDOS side of the split on one side, and side B of the REVERSAL OF MAN LP on the other side. Ebulliton then made up 1000 covers and released the record as a benefit for a local rape crisis center. However, if you want to check out both bands, this is an excellent time. The CRUDOS stuff on here is some of the best stuff from one of my favorite bands ever. Just perfect hardcore. I had never heard this REVERSAL OF MAN material, and although I thought I only liked them as a live band, I was pretty impressed by this stuff. Besides being good recorded, their artwork is fucking cool as shit. Anyway, that's the story with this one. (WR)
(Ebullition, PO Box 680, Goleta, CA 93116, www.ebullition.com)

CURSE - CD

This rules. Amped up hardcore with tons of energy and melody, rubbing shoulders with the likes of the EXPLOSION, LIFETIME, and AVAIL. There are a million and one twerps playing this kind of stuff these days, but these folks stand out, as they have managed to mix the right amount of hardcore with their catchy tunes to keep my head bobbing. Smart sociopolitical lyrics top off a smashing disc. My only complaint is that there are only six songs—can't wait for the full length. (TB)
(Hell Bent, PO Box 1529, Point Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742)

DADDY'S DOLLS - "Spoiled Punk" EP

While this has been released on a French label, it appears that these five "ladies" are, in fact, from Italy. If there's anything hotter than just your average chick playing punk rock, it's Italian chicks playing punk rock. That might not have anything to do with the quality of this record, but it is still a fact worth stating. While there are a fair amount of female punk bands these days, I find most lean towards the poppier type punk. This, on the other hand, is rougher, less polished and not pretty and nice and easy to swallow. It's a little more deliberate and prodding and sort of hardcore-ish. An Italian band on a French label with a song titled "Spanish Punk"—a truly international release. (KK)
(Panx, BP 5058, 31033 Toulouse, Cedex 5, FRANCE)

DEATHBAG - "Grind the Faces" EP

Hard, charging, straightforward punk rock with deep rumbling bass lines and heavily distorted guitars. The singer has great growling vocals that sound full of venomous anger, and the lyrics are mostly anti-religious. Plus they close out the EP with a cover of "Fuck Authority" by RAW POWER. Check this one out. (RC)
(Get The Axe, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, gettheaxerecords.com)

DEATH FROM ABOVE - "Heads Up" CD

Noisy, chaotic, rock 'n' roll from this Canadian two-piece (just bass and drums). This reminds me most of something like LIGHTNING BOLT but with pinches of someone like the VSS thrown in here and there. I could totally see this coming out on GSL, THREE ONE G, or any of those labels that seem to immerse themselves in this sort of stuff. I think you know what I'm talking about, yet at the same time, DEATH FROM ABOVE seems to rub off on me in a much less obnoxious way than, say BLACK

DICE or a band like that. In fact, I think I enjoyed this CD a little more than I want to believe. Let's just leave it at that. (SP)
(Ache, PO Box 138, 1001 W. Broadway #101, Vancouver BC, V6H 4E4 CANADA, www.acherecords.com)

DESTINATION DAYBREAK/ NEW MEXICAN DISASTER SQUAD - split CD

DESTINATION DAYBREAK are girl-fronted rocky punk, sounding somewhere between WHIRLPOOL and JACK KILLED JILL. They're pretty good—this is the third time I've listened to the disc and they're growing on me. The singer has a very distinct kind of deadpan voice that goes well with the chunky riffs. NEW MEXICAN DISASTER SQUAD are snotty thrashy hardcore. Their songs last about half as long as the previous band's. They remind me a little of NEGATIVE FX for some reason—not too fast and certainly not too slow. This is good shit. (AD)
(Breaker Breaker, PO Box 536071, Orlando, FL 32853)

Detrimental Greed

DETRIMENTAL GREED - "No Regard" EP

Shitbird! These guys are pretty damn good! Simple, straightforward wall-of-sound style music. A little metal, but that's what the kids love these days. Big monster/little monster vox which sound amazingly like Seth and Jessica of old FUKROT fame. Good punk rock lyrics about work, meat, anok, etc. The song "Outside Words" and the back cover photo/anti-societal statement about women's beauty really stand out. Buy this record—these people are doing good things. (JA)
(http://www.detrimentalgreed.com)

DIRT BIKE ANNIE - "It Ain't Easy Bein' Single" CD

Finally, all the band's singles and rarities on one practical CD. These NY amateur pop punk darlings have been doing it since 1996. Think Mutant Pop. Charm, spirit, and energy make these guys stand out. (RL)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

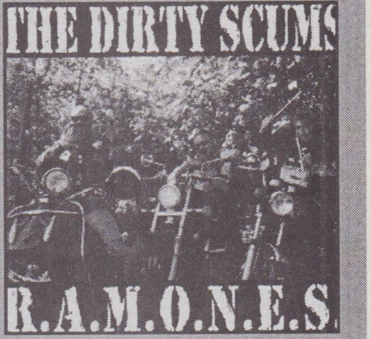
AUSTRALIAN SING A LONG with the DIRTBOMB singers

DIRTBOMBS - "By My Side/I Started a Joke"

I admire the prodigious talent of Mick Collins as much or more than the next guy—that said, I have to admit that recent DIRTBOMBS recs and live have left me occasionally nonplussed. Vaguely dissatisfied, more for my own selfish reasons than any wrongdoing by the band. The verdict this time 'round is that the band make a fine (repeated) stab at covering a duo of Australian tunes (the ELOIS' punchy punker "By My Side" and "I Started a Joke" by the early, unsullied edition of the BEE-GEES). More than a novelty single, at least for admirers of Collins and the band he rode in on. (JH)
(Zerox)

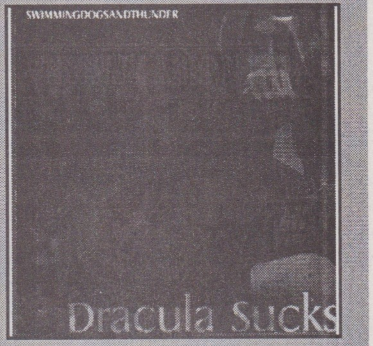
DISORDER - "Live 12/7/82" LP

Bristol's DISORDER were one of the first bands to have that "blown out speakers recorded on a walkman buried under pillows" sound which many bands have taken as their own since. Their early singles were rough as a badger's arse but still held together enough to be punk gems...this LP however is just too much—it's a fucking mess. They do all the "hits" like "Violent Crime" and "Complete Disorder" but you can barely make them out...for fans of total distorted noise (Mike Thorn) or DISORDER freaks only. This does bring back fond memories of seeing this band in the 80's and watching half the audience hit the deck after the first note in a glued up stupor...ahh memories. (TB)
(no address)



DISTEMPER - "Dobroe Utro!" LP

I would never listen to this record with any regularity, but I will say that anyone who listens to LESS THAN JAKE should do whatever they can to get their hands on it. As ska-punk, it's still far from the brilliance of an OPERATION IVY, but these guys really know how to do what they do. The lyrics are sung in Russian with a welcome gruffness, and they are printed in the fucking massive insert (a booklet the size of an LP, which features a picture of the bassist playing in a marijuana leaf costume—sheer genius) in Russian, German and English. Even in the rough translations, you can detect the hope they're reaching for. Again, this is not revolutionary or even very appealing to my ears, but if you're a ska kid looking to branch out, you can't go wrong. (MX)
(Wanda, Monster Kludas, Rosa Luxemburg Strasse 23, 06618 Naumburg, GERMANY, www.anr77.de)



THE DISTRACTION - "Calling All Radios" LP

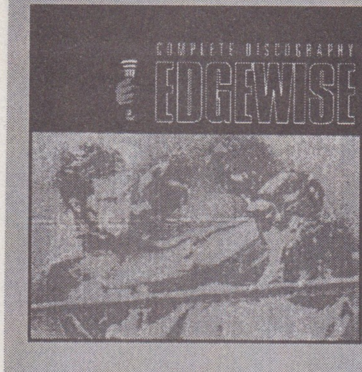
Herky jerky bug-sunglasses-stripey-shirt-curled-lip punk. This sounds like the STITCHES with the singer from LE SHOK on helium. Pretty basic tempo wise, but one great whiny buzzsaw anthem after another. My head head hurts after pogoing too hard. The STITCHES are dead! Long live the DISTRACTION! (TB)
(Radio Blast, Hildegardstr. 13, 44809 Bochum, GERMANY)

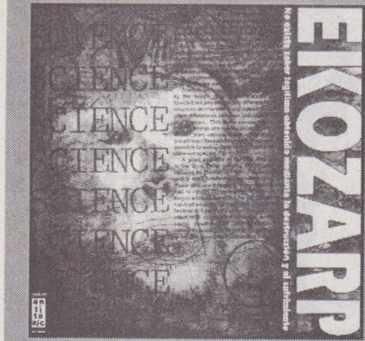
THE DIRTY SCUMS - "R.A.M.O.N.E.S." CD

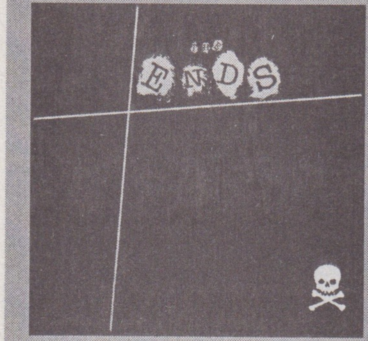
The DIRTY SCUMS celebrate their twentieth year and fifteenth release with this 23 song CD. Their Belgian/British accents chant over old school punk whose themes fluctuate between "No Peace in Tibet" and "Show Me Your Tits," but they lean heavily to the latter. It's good to see they've kept their spunk and true their loose, three chord tunes. This also includes three bonus tracks from these guys' other bands. (HM)
(Dirty, Kapelleweg 10-8700 Schuiferskapelle, BELGIUM, www.thedirtyscums.com)

THE DOUBT - "Contrast Disorder" LP

Unearthed from the vaults: a collection of tracks by a bunch of spotty no-marks from the arse end of Northern Ireland who self released one impossible to find four track 7" in the late 70s and promptly disappeared back to obscurity from whence they came. Here we have that 7" with a bunch of demo tracks, the four single tracks are truelly amazing: rough powerful power pop punk with a great mod/60s edge. The killer track is "Lookaway"—with is rambling basslines and choppy guitar—makes this LP worth hunting for, although it also appeared on Bloodstains Across Northern Ireland. As with many of these one single







Exploding Hearts

wonders, the rest of the tracks are throwaway filler—the real meat is in the seven inch—why not just reissue that? But those single tracks? Killer. (TB)
(Rave Up, Via Montecuccoli 13-00176, Roma, ITALY)

DRACULA SUCKS - "Swimming Dogs And Thunder" CD

An Austin, Texas four piece playing SUPERCHUNK style power pop mixed with a darker element of frustration and sincerity that one would find on a DRIVE LIKE JEHU record. At the same time, this release has all these math-rocky elements, but have no fear, because it's pissed off enough to make it a genuine punk record. Good stuff, I hope to hear more. (AS)
(Die Die Diemond, PO Box 161925, Austin, TX 78716)

EDGEWISE - "Complete Discography" CD

The first thing I thought when I saw this in my bin for review was, "I can't believe someone thought that EDGEWISE was worthy of a discography." But after giving all 30 tracks a listen, I realized that this was a pretty good hardcore band that was pretty much overlooked in the straightedge scene. The CD starts off with their most recent material, which was very influenced by INTEGRITY and other tough-guy hardcore bands from the early 90s. I can't help but hear a HELMET influence in some of the breakdowns and choruses. I keep on waiting for the singer to yell, "In the meantime!" As the CD progresses to the band's earliest material, EDGEWISE's sound gets faster and more melodic, not unlike later TURNING POINT or SWIZ. This was by far my favorite stuff on here. I know they had an LP, but was it released in the US? Didn't they have a 7" out on Smorgasbord? Which release has their cover of S.O.A.'s "Lost in Space"? Why don't I look in the CD for answers? Oh wait, because there is no information in the booklet! There's no list of releases, no lyrics, nothing but a website to go to for more information on the band. What if you don't own a computer? I hate when labels do a lazy job on a band's discography (see anything reissued by Dischord Records as an example of how to get this right). As far as I am concerned this band is only half represented by this CD, which is sad because I really liked some of their stuff on here. (CC)
(Thorp, PO Box 2007, Upper Darby, PA 19082)

EKOZARP - "No Existe Saber Legitimo Obtenido Mediante..." EP

This is total DIY political punk from Spain. Loud, thrashy punk full of buzzing guitars and vocals full of venom. While I didn't find it particularly mind-blowing, it was still damn solid and worth a listen. There are some strong political messages to be found here. The EP comes with a thick booklet (not in English) and a lyric sheet that touches on everything from animal rights to sexism. (RC)
(Victimas Del Progreso, Crimenes De Estado, PO Box 24037, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN)

ENDS - "I'm Sorry/The Latest Beat"

STITCHES-lite from Texas. It's got that skinny tie, stripey shirt snarl, but with a pop edge, not unlike the BRIEFS. Two tracks over in a blink of an eye...decent goods. (TB)
(Pelado, 521 West Wilson #C103, Costa Mesa, CA 92627)

EXPLODING HEARTS - "Making Teenage Faces" 7"

Hands down the best single of 2002. This is what I call a classic record. Perfectly done power pop with bitter sweet lyrics and catchy as fuck music delivered by Portland's newest darlings The EXPLODING HEARTS serve up two well crafted and brilliantly delivered gems. The title track is a fun romp through a high-school-gone-to-hell day dream ("Jenny's poppin' birth control still wearin' braces, we're all too bust makin' teenage faces," "Someone shot the principal right in the head, school is out forever and we're glad that he's dead"). Not since "School's Out for Ever" have I been this impressed with a post-adolescent's final fuck you to the school system and high school's boredom. The flip side offers "Your Shadow," the dark and in your face ode to lost love. The EXPLODING HEARTS are one of the only bands worth listening to right now. Sleazy, dirty candy ballads and mescaline induced teen angst served with a whiskey Slurpee chaser, the HEARTS are you new favorite band. Eat it up. (BM)
(Vinyl Warning, PO Box 2991, Portland, OR 97208-2991, www.vinylwarning.com)

EXXON VALDEZ/DARE DARE DEVIL - split EP

Two garage-rocking French bands. EXXON VALDEZ has the whiny singer with simplistic drums beats and a few guitar solos that make it sound on the new wave side. DARE DARE DEVIL goes for the fast, more macho sound. The singer has a deep voice, but seems to hit some high notes a couple of times. They probably drink a lot of beer. (CK)
(P.O.G.O. c/o Lionel Beyet, 11, rue de la Souderie, 78 180 Montigny le Bretonneux, FRANCE, pogo@chez.com

)FA. DAMMICH - "Handgriff Nur Bei Gefahr Ziehen! Jeder Missbrauch Wird Bestraft" EP

This is so generically German it's surreal. I'd guess this is merely a guitar a keyboard and drums. The guitar and keys lay down these three chord progressions in unison with militaristic German anthem vocals. At times I hear a lo-fi BIG BLACK, but I always hear a rockin' tune. Pretty cool. (HM)
(Ben K_thnig, MŸggelstr. 28 10247 Berlin GERMANY, www.anr77.de)

FM KNIVES - "Promotional Device" EP

The latest cool band from that valley empire known as Sacramento. Kinda pop, kinda punk, kinda messed up. Maybe a garage BUZZCOCKS. Damn Ed Carroll's the drummer of NAR and PRETTY GIRLS fame, so you know it's gonna be good. This is a great EP from a band with tunes and spirit! (RL)
(Smartguy, 3288 21st, PMB #32, San Francisco, CA 94110, www.smartguyrecords.com)

LA FALCE - CD

Italian pummel-core. They're not metal, they're not hardcore, nor are they grind, but they occupy that realm in-between all three that is usually populated with Germans who tend to like things of the extreme, precise variety. They're brutal, harsh, and intense, but still can maintain a groove that you can pound your

fist to; it's recorded well, giving that extra punch to your face. The lyrics are all in Italian; furthermore, it's packaged pretty cool for a CD. I wouldn't say that they're anything new and/or original, but that's not always the point, is it? The band no longer exists, as the drummer died in 2001 in a car accident and the surviving members formed a new band, so this is probably all that you'll ever hear from them. (WM)
(Red Cars Go Faster, Via Quarenghi 50, 24122 Bergamo, ITALY, www.redcarsgofaster.it)

Fa.Dammich
Handgriff nur bei Gefahr ziehen!
Jeder Mißbrauch wird bestraft

FAT DAY - "Poop" EP

Four Harvard graduates taking the confines of punk rock to their outermost limit. A live show that has progressed over the last five years from songs played by jumping on mini-trampolines to their most recent tour where FAT DAY performed a rock opera by playing keyboards built into construction helmets with Viking horns jutting from the sides. Nominally attractive at best, FAT DAY's musical superiority shines like a beacon on a foggy Boston morning, leading the way into a harbor where, in the exceptionally capable hands of FAT DAY, punk rock is redefined almost daily, and each incarnation just gets better and better. Forget everything you know, because when you put Poop on the turntable, you cannot just listen to it...you live it. (WN)
(100% Breakfast, PO Box 381804, Cambridge, MA 02238)

FM Knives
Promotional Device

THEE FINE LINES/JIM-JIMS - split EP

THEE FINE LINES are mid-tempo 60s garage, kind of reminding me of the TROUBLEMAKERS with female vocals. Lots of fuzz and distortion like I like it. The JIM-JIMS are more modern, more straightforward pop ponk. "Tube Top" has kind of a G-rated ANGRY SAMOANS sound to it. Hilarious. (DP)
(Wee Rock, PO Box 333, Springfield, MO 65801, theefinelines@yahoo.com)

THE FIRST STEP - "Open Hearts and Clear Minds" CD

It would be silly to go into detail about how much I love this record twice in the same magazine, so I will keep it short. The 7" version of this CD with the same title was the best straightedge hardcore record to come out last year (see last month's issue for a full description in my Top Ten of 2002). This CD includes their awesome demo, and a live CBGBs set. Hey Livewire, send the vinyl next time! (CC)
(Livewire, PO Box 007, Mendham, NJ 07945)

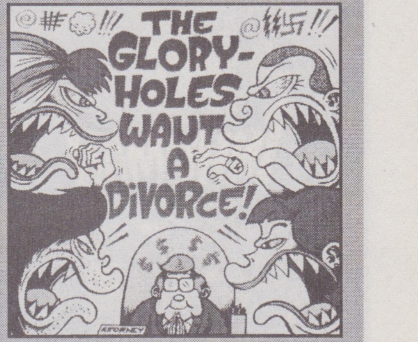
GASOLHEADS

FOREIGN OBJECTS - "Violent World" LP

Sort of like a *goyische* DICTATORS with a couple additional moustaches and a keyboard player (with full beard). In Hawaiian shirts and funny sunglasses. The FOREIGN OBJECTS were active in the halcyon days/weeks of 1979-1981. Where, the liner notes don't suggest. America's Heartland, I'd reckon. Byron Coley calls it "a classic" in the liner notes. Me, I can't see myself listening to "Not Cool/Sgt. Sanders," "Speak English," or "You Go Home" any more frequently than the NERVEBREAKERS reissue or SHA-NA-NA double live record that an older sibling foisted on me. Novelty bar band dross, mostly, and near proof that the *Killed by Death* gravy train has left the station and is heading 'round the bend. "I Am a Dog" is funny. (JH)
(Rave Up, via Montecuccoli 13 - 00176 Roma, ITALY, www.tiscalinenet.it/raveup)

FRAMTID - "Under the Ashes" LP

And they just keep getting better!! With noisy crustcore mayhem along the lines of Japanese super heroes like GLOOM and DISCLOSE, FRAMTID's new LP just fucking destroys! Bleak lyrics, bombastic mayhem, *Under the Ashes* is just twelve songs of pulverizing blasts of fury. (WN)
($15 ppd: Crust War, 1-28-3A, Shikitsu-Nishi 2, Naniwa-Ku, Osaka City, 556-0015, JAPAN)


#©!!
@#$!!
THE GLORY-HOLES WANT A DIVORCE!

GASMASK/COWARD - split LP

Many thanks to our friends at Crust War for making these extremely rare tracks available once again! GASMASK play raging Japanese punk with a slight pogo-punk feel and that nearly trademark Japanese snarling vocal delivery. Raw mid-tempo punk from their EP on Skeleton Records, originally released in 1985, which is, of course, now a very rare collector's item. On the flip we have COWARD, who crank out some high energy raw CONFUSE-esque hardcore gleaned from their 1987 flexi EP, also on Skeleton Records. Both sides contain unreleased live and studio tracks from both bands, plus tracks from the secret project band COWMASK/GASWARD. All in all, pretty ragin' stuff here, a definite need for fans of ATROCIOUS MADNESS, BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS, and other such raw punk insanity. Limited to 1000 copies though, and all indications say that Crust War is all out of them by now, so start searching, noble punx! (MT)
(Crust War, 1-28-3A, Shikitsu-Nishi 2, Naniwa-Ku, Osaka-City 556-0015, JAPAN)

GASOLHEADS - "Lying Shooter Position" CD

Now this is some rockin' punk with verve. These French have a command of the English language and the punk they pump out. Thirteen kick-ass tunes. Check it out. (HM)
(Lollipop, 7 impasse Monsegur 13016 Marseille, FRANCE www.chez.com/gasolheads)

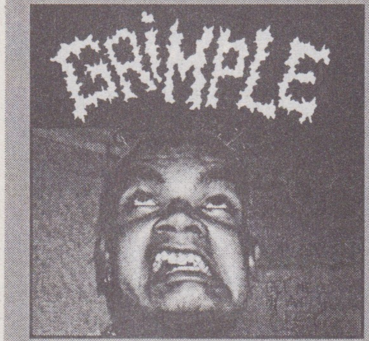
GLORY FADES - "Love, Expulsion, Revolution" EP

Nicely executed fast hardcore with a few melodic guitar parts sprinkled here and there to keep things interesting. This band's lyrics are right on. "Keep it in the Dojo" is not only a rad name for a song, but I can't think of a better song attacking jock violence in the scene since BATTERY's "Go Back to the Gym." It's very refreshing to hear female back-ups from a style of hardcore that is usually associated with well...men. The lead vocalist reminds me a lot of Eric Ozene. Matter of fact, "Kill the Vampires" could easily be a NERVE AGENTS song. Everything about this record rules. (CC)
(Eric Yu, 104 Bonny Ln, North Andover, MA 01845)

GLORYHOLES - "...Want a Divorce" CD

The GLORYHOLES have a real deep and abiding Pacific Northwest "feel" to them that can't be explained away by local maven Jack Endino's production (which sounds a cleaner than I'd like, but nobody asked my opinion). I'm thinking of the crop of p-rock bands that emerged from that region maybe ten years

the Great Clearing Off
the Sound Of Failure



INHUMAN
BLACK REIGN

back: GAS HUFFER, DERELICTS, that kinda thing. The GLORYHOLES are well in touch with their sense of childlike innocence but still manage to dig deep and come up with titles like "Pig Fucker" and "Solid Gold Maximum Booty." It's mid-tempo stomp with snarly leads and desperate yelps of pain and/or fear. Me, I'd rather see what magic the band can demonstrate in front of an audience of well-wishers. (JH)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 17905, Seattle, WA 98107, www.thegloryholes.com)

THE GREAT CLEARING OFF/THE SOUND OF FAILURE - split EP

Holy fuck, this record rules. I had never heard either band, although I know each has been around for at least a while. The GREAT CLEARING OFF songs just floored me. Goddamn. OK, it's hard to call it melodic hardcore without all the stigma attached to the phrase. But that's what this is, and it's so, so good. Like sped-up KID DYNAMITE, with quirkier guitar parts and ECONOCHRIST vocals. And, fuck, the songs move forward at the perfect pace, and then all of a sudden there's some crazy guitar solo and it all works so well! There is definite metal influence here, too, but in a way that I can handle. The songs stand on their own, but the lyrics are top notch, too. It is hard to compete with the GREAT CLEARING OFF, but the SOUND OF FAILURE rocks almost as hard. Their stuff is similar, although a little more metal and not quite as straightforward. They are really good, as well. Please check this record out. OK, then. (WR)
(Ed Walters, 2416 South Warnock St, Philadelphia, PA 19148, www.edwaltersrecords.org)

GRIMPLE - "One More" EP

This is the second GRIMPLE re-issue Prank Records has put out, and they do a nice job with colored vinyl and all the original artwork. If you don't already know GRIMPLE, they're balls-out East Bay hardcore. This was originally released in 1992, but it still sounds fresh and potent. Excellent. (HM)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

GUITAR GANGSTERS - "Another Day in Pleasantville" CD

Captain Oi's house tuneful punk band returns with its latest full-length. In the vein of COCKSPARRER and NEUROTICS (although not of quite as legendary status). This is good songwriter punk with substance and style. (RL)
(Captain Oi)

HENCHMEN - "Lust for Glory" CD

This is apparently the CD version of an LP that came out a couple of years ago. Worth a second mention for sure. A great New Zealand punk band from the early 80s. Yep, lotsa STOOGES influence. All recorded pre-1985, this is a rockin' collection even though it doesn't include everything by the band. Classic! (RL)
(Raw Power, PO Box 7127, Wellesley St, Auckland, NEW ZEALAND, rawpower@paradise.net.nz)

HOLOKAUST - "War?" EP

A really solid slab of 45-speed vinyl from this Southern California three-piece that sounds like English hardcore circa 1983. The first song, a flanged bass instrumental, brings to mind the Part 1 track off the *Cleanse the Bacteria* comp, while the second song makes me think of the almighty ANTI SECT—never a bad thing to remind me of. The third song sounds like a lifted DESPISE YOU riff played by the VARUKERS. The fourth and last is straight up D-beat madness with a locked groove at the end. If all that sounds like it's your thing, then you can't go wrong here. (WM)
(After The Bomb, distributed by Hardcore Holocaust)

HOT CROSS/LIGHT THE FUSE AND RUN - split EP

Emo hardcore, which is a dead musical format on the West Coast, seems to be doing just fine back east. If you are familiar with the stuff that Level Plane puts out then this record will be no surprise. Both bands are typical of the East Coast emo that has been coming out for the last few years. HOT CROSS do two songs. They both have the typical quiet/loud dynamic. For the most part, they are up-tempo and heavy. The vocalist screams out all the lyrics and the songwriting is pretty catchy. I was skeptical about wanky lead guitar at first but soon realized that it is a big part of what makes the band worth listening to. LIGHT THE FUSE AND RUN has more of straight-up hardcore feel to their first song. It's fast, with plenty of screaming and backup shouting. It's similar to their previous material, but this song is a bit better than what I've heard before. The second song is a rather disappointing, slow instrumental. In all, the record is well worth checking out. (PA)
(Electric Human Project, 500 South Union St, Wilmington, DE 19805, www.electrichumanproject.com)

ICONS OF FILTH - "Nostradamus" LP

ICONS OF FILTH's brand new album after almost twenty years. On Go Kart Records. Weird. Here's the thing, it's pretty good, but it's just not ICONS OF FILTH. This is a little slower, not quite so rough, and as you would expect not quite so angry. It still has the Squeak artwork (probably the best thing about ICONS OF FILTH really), but it's in color and therefore doesn't quite fit. I hope they're enjoying themselves, otherwise what's the point? (AD)
(Go Kart, PO Box 20,Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012)

INHUMAN - "Black Reign" CD

This falls somewhere between Bridge Nine style "hardcore" and Warped Tour "hardcore." Five studio tracks and two live numbers that are pretty well executed with a style that reminds me of AFI, but with a huge SOCIAL DISTORTION influence present as well. Songs about being miserable and broken hearts. (WN)
(R.P.P., PO Box 48, BXL 19, 1190 Brussels, BELGIUM)

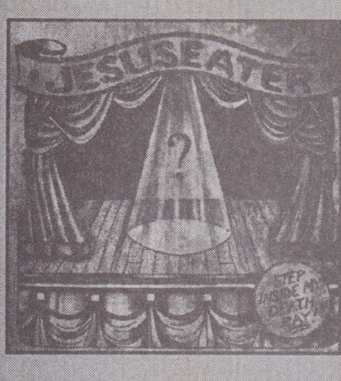
INTELLIGENCE/POPULAR SHAPES - split EP

A reason to continue buying punky 7" s. Easy enuff, huh? Four tracks of blaring wave-edged aggression, Seattle's the INTELLIGENCE paying the 'inscrutable' card and the SHAPES acting all rubbery and

impatient. I have a very large wager down on the INTELLIGENCE at a certain internet gambling site, they are gonna be playing Wembley real soon baby. Or, maybe the Parkside...but still! Great things! (RW)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA, 98111)

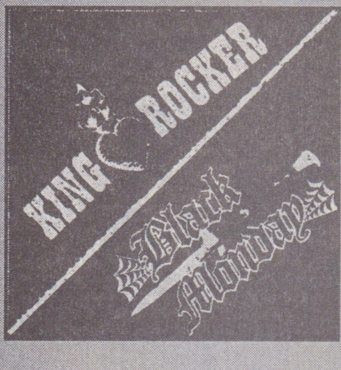
JESUS EATER - "Step Inside My Death Ray" CD

I reviewed JESUS EATER's CDEP months ago and was pretty impressed, but this just blew me away. Of course I have to mention Shawn Brown (DAG NASTY, SWIZ, etc.), as he is clearly at the center of JESUS EATER's heavy rock onslaught. If you're at all familiar with the aforementioned bands, you know what Shawn's vocals bring to the mix and what a powerful impact they seem to have on the listener. As for the music: complete driving heaviness with the guitars crunching right up against your eardrums. I was also stoked that these songs seem to have a bit more character and are a bit more upbeat than the EP's. I would love to see this band live. (SP)
(Deathwish, www.deathwishinc.com)


JESUS EATER
STEP INSIDE MY DEATH RAY

KIDS NEAR WATER - "Hey Zeus!" CD

Ah, post punk. Well, I was hoping this would be really great because the artwork and layout on the record is so damn good. The music is played with a lot of skill and I can tell they put a lot of work into this record. They have definitely heard FUGAZI, and they have definitely heard CAP'N JAZZ. And their songs go from sounding quite melodic, like the PROMISE RING and being harder and more rocking, like JR EWING. There is a lot going on here with guitar parts and well-written songs. And some cool harmonic parts. The band tries hard not to fit in a certain category or style of music, for which I am glad. The songs do seem to drag on a little for my taste, but I think if I keep listening to the album, it will grab me. A really fucking good album here. (WR)
(Firefly, www.fireflyrecordings.com)

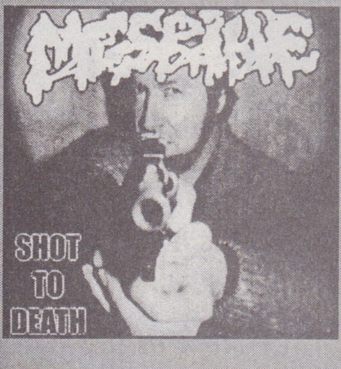


KILL CRUSH DESTROY - "Drain" EP

As far as I know, this is the first release from KILL CRUSH DESTROY, and geez, what a good start. This record is fucking good! They play fairly straightforward hardcore, really tightly. We're talking really compact songs with interesting parts. Besides being really good hardcore songs, the vocals are awesome, both sonically and lyrically. The singer has an awesome voice, maybe like if Joey Vindictive sang hardcore. The lyrics are really well done, mostly about relationships and all, but not in the AMERICAN NIGHTMARE way. Just good fucking stuff. The recording is of perfect quality, not overdone or anything. A nice simple layout with good live pictures. I strongly recommend, I do. (WR)
(17cm, PO Box 563, Lakehurst, NJ 08733, www.17cmrecords.com)

KING ROCKER/BLACK MONDAY - split EP

Both bands on this EP play bar rock heavily influenced by punk (it might be the other way around; I would have to see them live). Imagine a small, smoke-filled dive with two people watching a heavily-tattooed band, and you've got the context that this kind of thing comes out of. I like this a lot more than I thought I would, and when the bands cut out the wanking, they write some pretty fucking catchy songs. I wouldn't necessarily want to listen to an entire LP of this kind of thing, but as a quick fix it does just fine. (MX)
(Split Seven, 12405 Venice Blvd. #265, Los Angeles, CA 90066)



KOCKER MIT GLAS - "Grenzziehung" EP

Wow. I'm taken by surprise by this German band. KOCKER MIT GLAS is not at all what I expected. Their songs have a unique sound, almost like a slowed-down take on the "emo-violence" sound of the mid 90s, but dark and gloomy in a way that's crust just as much as it's emo—at times chaotic, at times droney and repetitive. The record has a muddy feeling to it, and none of the songs seem to grab me the way a hardcore song should. But it's thought-out and inventive in a way I don't come across too often. (VH)
(Better Home Plastic, c/o s. day, Leverkusenstr 14, d-22761, Hamburg, GERMANY, www.perkoro.de)

THE KRAYS - "A Time for Action" LP

I'm not crazy about this band's earlier gear, but this LP rocks!! This is a sharp fuck you to all the crappy mid-tempo "street punk" bands. This, my friends, is what your band should sound like. Imagine if a band like the UNSEEN had the chops of TOXIC REASONS (they cover "No Pity") or DOA. Punchy, catchy and totally memorable with a ton of "whoah ohhs" which I'm a sucker for. Best thing on TKO for years... awesome. (TB)
(TKO, 3216 West Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221)

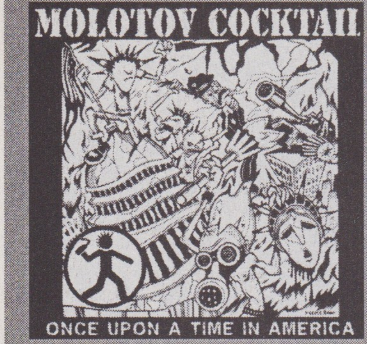
MINORITYBLUESBAND

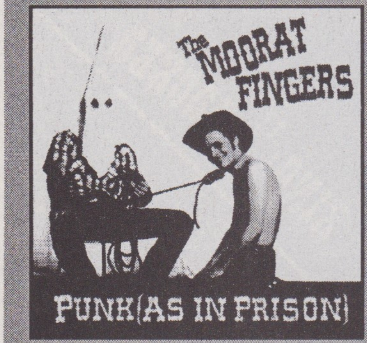
LORELEI - "Our Minds Have Been Electrified" CD

The layout on this record is a little odd, so I was expecting one of those releases from a foreign country that is like techno industrial stuff with lyrics about orange juice. But, guess what? I was wrong. The album is really good. It is pretty slow, bass-heavy stuff that I wouldn't exactly classify as punk rock, although there are hints of it. There are kind of moaning female vocals which go really well with the songs. The bass lines and guitar lines work really well together. The lyrics are personal and well-written. I really like this album. It is raw and stripped-down, but extremely melodic in a cool way. Maybe like SLEATER KINNEY with a lot less punch, slowed down a little. Really really good. (WR)
(Ice-Made, www.ice-made.com)

MESRINE - "Shot To Death" EP

Brutal, wall-of-sound grindcore de Quebec. Reminds me of FEAR OF GOD in the over-the-top.... well... wall-of-sound delivery and bludgeon riff guitar action. There are two singers (actually three when you count the drummer who sings on three tracks) but the main vocalist is so incredibly deep, thick, and guttural that at times during the first side I thought that I might be playing this at the wrong speed. This is straight-up blown-speaker, bloody walls from all the ensuing carnage, run-from-terror grind. You should know by now if you're into this or not. Count me in for more. (WM)
(2255 Ch. Demers, St-Nicholas, Quebec, G7A 2N3, CANADA, www.geocities.com/mesrinegrindcore)


MOLOTOV COCKTAIL
ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA



NEGATIVES
RULES AND REGULATIONS

MINORITY BLUES BAND - "Grab the Fire Swinging in the Rain" CD

Well, this certainly isn't a blues band. It's catchy, hyper-melodic, and the guitars have a jangly, semi-dissonant feel to them that reminds me of bands that tend to get categorized as "emo" by *Spin* Magazine. The intricacy of the music saves this from sucking, but I still wish there was more life or energy. The best moment is their cover of "My Death" by NEWTOWN NEUROTICS. They amp up the speed, but not so much as to make it obnoxious, and add a bunch of melodic leads, really making the song their own. If they could do to their own songs what they did to that one, they'd really have something. (MX)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16 Daita, Setagaya-Ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN)

MIRRORMEN - "Breaking Glass" CD

The UK's MIRRORMEN tear through five tracks of cleanly produced hardcore punk that at time reminds me a bit of *Dixie*-era AVAIL plus a cover of DRI's "Karma." Tuneful vocals, and bright guitars over a speedy drum attack. Nice, catchy and melodic. I can see those of you who like STRIKE ANYWHERE or fellow Virginians TRIAL BY FIRE being into this a great deal. (MT)
(Malt Soda, PO Box 7611, Chandler, AZ 85246, www.maltsoda.com)

MOLOTOV COCKTAIL - "Once Upon a Time in America" CD

Snotty-ass punk as fuk'n fuk from the filthy streets of New York City. I can envision the spikey-tops breaking bottles and having quite the good time at their gigs at C Squat or good old ABC No Rio. Mid-tempo pogo-riffic punk rock that at times reminds me of the first CHOKING VICTIM EP. Fuck man, these guys would have ruled the scene when bands like 2.5 CHILDREN INC., the PIST, MALACHI KRUNCH and MANKIND? still stalked the planet. I love stuff like this, as any self-respecting punk rocker should. Up tha' fuk'n punx! (MT)
(Eastern Threat, 150 E. 2nd St. #1A, New York, NY 10009, www.easternthreatrecords.com)

MOORAT FINGERS - "Punk (As in Prison)" CD

Over-the-head ski masks: *check*. Noisome lyrical sentiments ("Dirty Fuckin' Liar," "Mange ma Merde," and "Dead on the Lawn"): *check*. The MOORAT FINGERS are a low-minded crew who shoulder a heavy RIP OFFS influence and dwell on the dark side of the beergarden. They're Germans, which explains their exhortations to "gib' mir kopf!" Music-wise it's tough noise that reminds this boy of a slower, more rock 'n' roll incarnation of HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE. If you're into gank like early/good ANGRY SAMOANS or the teeming masses of humanity that comprise the Rip Off Records stable, then the MOORAT FINGERS are your meat. (JH)
(Radio Blast, www.mooratfingers.de)

MURDOCK/HER LITTLE SISTERS MOTHERLESS - split EP

MURDOCK is the better of the two bands on this record. Their two songs do pretty well when they stick to playing hardcore and screaming. The hardcore parts are fast and driving, with drums heavy on the cymbals and snare, and slightly discordant guitars. The problem is that both songs revert to a melodic hardcore style at some point (the second does it less than the first). The song slows down, the vocals are sung, and the guitar plays this octave thing. No matter how good the other parts are, it is really disappointing to hear some melodic part thrown in. On the other side, HLSM plays one song. The first half of it consists of electronics and samples. The rest of the song is pretty emo. Musically it sounds like a cross between MOSS ICON and ORDINATION OF AARON, but it just doesn't sound nearly as good as that description does. The vocals are mostly talking that is too loud in the mix. The recording is poor. It is hard to get through the whole thing. (PA)
(www.altinvillageandmine.com)

N.O.Y.F.B. - "Skirts Raised & Asses Hazed" EP

Complete wall-of-crap lo-fi noisy feedback-ridden blur grind from SoCal like an even noisier GODSTOMPER. Side B is live, starts with BLACK FLAG's "Six Pack" and has a brief off-key "Iron Man" riff at the end, but not surprisingly, it doesn't sound much different than the studio side. I can't imagine getting too excited about this, but if you dig poorly-recorded noise, this is it. (EL)
(Agromosh, PO Box 2480, Escondido, CA 92033, www.geocities.com/agromosh)

NEGATIVES - "Rules and Regulations" CD

By-the-numbers overproduced Swedish punk rock. Gruff shouter over mid-paced streety-type stuff with the occasional guitar solo. Utterly generic. (RW)
(Trash2001, Postfach 10 16 53, D-46216, Bottrop, GERMANY)

NEUROSE URBANA - "Morte Caotica" EP

These Brazilian punks play six blasts of raw D-beat punk that just simply rules. Mid-tempo punk attack with a recording that makes them sound like they would fit right in on the classic SUB comp LP. Fans of clean sterile production should steer clear, but those of you who like your hardcore messy and raw will lap this up. Originally recorded in 1997 for a split EP that never came out, so many thanks to the fine folx at Strongly Opposed for making this available to the punx!
($5 ppd: Strongly Opposed, Flurweg 29, 2504 Biel, SWITZERLAND)

NEW MEXICAN DISASTER SQUAD - "Abrasive Repulsive Disorder" CD

OK, I got this CD a while back, and spent Christmas day trying to get people to recognize its greatness over nachos and adult beverages. With Abrasive, NEW MEXICAN DISASTER has released the second record that DAG NASTY should have made. That is, if DAG NASTY had recorded it today and had absorbed a little bit of GORILLA BISCUITS along the way. I can't really begin to tell you how good this CD is—I guess your only option is to go out and buy it. (JF)
(www.newmexicandisastersquad.com)

NEW TOWN ANIMALS - "Fashion Fallout/Fallin Outta Space"

Snotty, sneering pop punk in the EPOXIES school, with a little VINDICTIVES in there somewhere. Tight and hopped-up, it's a good time with a skinny tie and a pair of new wave sunglasses. Good shit, if you like it catchy and don't mind the schtick. Too bad about the packaging—someone fumbled with Photoshop when they should have stuck to their Xacto. (AC)

(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249, Seattle, WA 98111)

OFFENSIVE - "Human Machine" EP

An awesome record from this band from Sweden, who I was not previously familiar with. Lots of metal-inspired punk riffs here, which make for simple but catchy-as-shit hardcore songs. The sound is kind of sludgy and there are weird effects on the guitar, effects which I would not have fucked with. But it all ends up sounding good. The band does a KRIGSHOT cover, which kind of gives you an idea where they're coming from. This is really good, and I would be very interested to hear more, later down the line. (WR)

(Falafel Media, Mailbox 12006, Drottninggaten 13, 252 80 Helsingborg SWEDEN)

OHEISVASARA - "Vasaranmerkki" EP

Eight-song EP of fast, alienated Finnish crust. Their third EP in five years, this still sounds fresh and defiant. Male/female vocals alternate and also overlap. I would prefer a tighter song structure; this is all over the place, with descending guitar on the slow parts, more rocking interludes, and fast parts, all of which the vocals follow faithfully but with sporadic personality. Still, I'm left energized by the band's drive and anger. Lyrics in Finnish, with English translations in the liner notes. (AC)

(Prejudice, Siltavoudintie 3A2, 00640 Helsinki, FINLAND)

OKMONIKS - "Rustle Up Some Action With the Okmoniks" EP

A bit disappointing after their debut EP. That was so great, and this is just merely good. It's the same 60s-style organ-driven female-fronted rock that I love. The music, singing, and recording all sound great. It's the songs that are lacking. Where's the attitude and desperation? Maybe I've just got to play this one as much as I did the first one. We'll see. (CK)

($4 ppd: In-fi, 722 E. 9th St, Tucson, AZ 85719)

ONION FLAVORED RINGS - "Used to It" LP

OK, kids, this band may be based in the streets of San Francisco, but its sound is definitely based in the hills and town of the late-80s East Bay. It could be because Paul Curran (Benicia's answer to Alan Lomax) is in the band, since the other two people in the ONION FLAVORED RINGS are from Miami. This is seriously good power pop shit, and if this is what bay unity sounds like, than I am willing to give up this whole rivalry thing. (JF)

(SPAM, PO Box 21588, El Sobrante, CA 94820)

OPERATION S - "Délinquante/Cauchemar"

Good Christ, Iwan and Ceçelia have gone all *nouvelle vague* on us. Who would have thought? You remember the NO TALENTS, *eh*? Two of 'em on this record. OPERATION S make me think of a couple things at once: SIOUXSIE & THE BANSHEES *The Scream* LP; METAL URBAIN's android-age kookiness; late-period NO TALENTS (natch); the current crop of basement 'wave bands honing their craft in abbatoirs worldwide. There's a definite spooky, damaged edge to their sound, suggestive of late-night terrors and early-morning regret. Killer. (JH)

(Wild Wild, BP 55-92138, Montrouge Cedex, FRANCE)

PETER & THE TEST TUBE BABIES - "Alien Pubduction" CD

Another month, another TEST TUBE BABIES CD. This is a reissue of their '97 LP with a 7" from '99 tacked on the end. It's the same middle-of-the-road punk-rock-with-toilet-humor as their other records. Isn't it about time these 40-something's grew up? This CD isn't horrific, it's just...nothing. Crap lyrics, mediocre tunes...yawn, give it up guys. (TB)

(Captain Oi, PO Box 501, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP10 8QA UK)

PHANTOM ROCKERS - " Rise Up" CD

Entertaining psychobilly for fans of the REV. HORTON HEAT and the like. All your standards: Cadillacs, psychos, and creepy crawlies. The unnecessary marketing of the album as one with an ex-EXPLOITED member make me laugh though. (SR)

(Drunkabilly, c/o Beirnaert Chirtophe, Postbus 87, 9050 Ledeberg 1, BELGIUM, drunkabilly@planetinternet.be)

THE PLAGUE/LUMBERGH - split EP

On this split, LUMBERGH delivers some solid, driving hardcore with super pissed high-end vocals piercing your eardrums. I reviewed their 7" months ago and will say that the material here is definitely better. The music itself has all sorts of complexities but comes together and flows quite well. It's obvious that LUMBERGH spent some actual time crafting these songs. Very nice. The PLAGUE are a bit more straightforward fast-core with a pretty heavy early 80s DC influence. Pretty standard stuff, but done very well. I especially like the vocals which sort of indirectly remind me of Rollins during his early days with BLACK FLAG. Solid split. (SP)

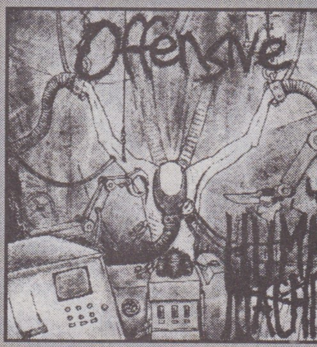
(www.lumbergh.cjb.net)

PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS - "Spearheading the Sin Movement" CD

I've always been a big fan of PLANES. Their live shows are fucking incredible and the elements they fuse together to craft their songs is fucking brilliant. Another thing I always appreciate about PLANES is that their recordings are always really raw, but completely powerful just the same. This EP is no different. While PLANES seem to have moved slightly further away from the melodic hooks that always reminded me a bit of SAMIAM, they've managed to embrace this sort of dark, dirty feel that is all over this CD. And while I may prefer the earlier material, PLANES is clearly making a step in their own direction with this release (SP)

(No Idea, www.noidearecords.com)

ABRASIVE REPULSIVE DISORDER



OHEISVASARA
VASARANMERKKI

PHANTOM ROCKERS
RISE UP
13 KILLERS

PODSTAR - "Lovely 32" CD

There must be something in the water in Lawrence, Kansas. All their bands are getting pretty damn pop. You know, GET UP KIDS, ANNIVERSARY. I like this release a lot. This is some infectious, punky pop. Even the slow songs are decent. Fans of the Lawrence, Kansas scene won't be disappointed. (RL)
(Noisome, PO Box 3570, Lawrence, KS 66046, www.noisome.com)

POUNDAFLESH
CRY FROM THE PEO

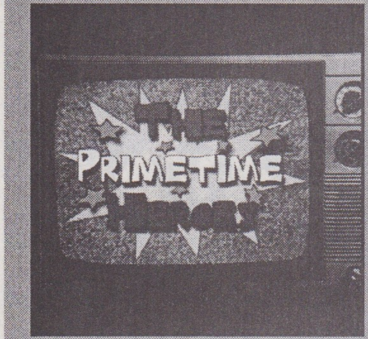
POUNDAFLESH - "Cry from the People" EP

What a good bunch o' geezers! These are self-proclaimed "UK DIY Punx," and that seems to ring true. And with the slew of reunion, 20-years-too-late punk bands in England these days, POUNDAFLESH are a sip of coffee in a tired world. With crunchy, catchy guitar riffs, plucky bass lines, solid drumming, and tough as fuck vocals. A British stewpot of CRIMPSHRINE, POISON IDEA, and STRYCHNINE. An old punk's UNSEEN. Good record. (JA)
(Poundaflesh, 25 St. Thomas Rd, Normanton/Derby, DE23 8RF UK)

PREMONITIONS OF WAR
THE TRUE FACE OF PANIC

PREMONITIONS OF WAR - "The True Face of Panic" CD

Not one of the better Relapse-wanna-be bands to emerge from the eastern Midwest lately, this tech-metal/grind band sounds identical to the likes of BURNT BY THE SUN and LUDDITE CLONE, especially the former. Their drummer is solid, as is to be expected, but the singer's got a really irritating delivery as well as an advanced case of what my friend Dan refers to as, "Can't Shut the Fuck Up Syndrome," in which the sufferer feels the need to sing over every fucking part of the song. They're a tight group, but the riffs and songs come off ultimately as uninspired and uninspiring. (EL)
(Goodfellow, 762 Upper James St, Suite 275, Hamilton, Ontario L9C 3A2, CANADA, www.goodfellowrecords.com)



PRIMETIME HEROES - "Politics" CD

If you're a fan of Cheshire Cat-era BLINK 182, this might tickle your fancy. It has that still-unrefined quality that the band managed to completely lose somewhere along the way. Beware of the songs with ska parts, though. They will clear any room. Plenty of glamor shots in the insert, and the singer sounds exactly like what's-his-fuck from NEW FOUND GLORY, complete with grossly obvious vocal enhancement (important message to all punk rock engineers: if you don't know how to properly use Acu-tune and make it unnoticeable, don't fucking bother). In conclusion, this CD gets a big fat "weaksauce." (MX)
(Noisome, PO Box 3570, Lawrence, KS 66046, www.theprimetimeheroes.com)

THE PRODUCTS - "Fast Music" LP

.....lost punk rock nuggets vol. 29....hmmmmm....another Rave Up record for your collection.....What we got here is an old San Diego four-piece....'80/'81 era....new wave/punk.....not bad stuff actually, the sound quality is very good....it's all studio....none of those terrible live tracks that Rave Up always uses for filler.....I don't know how sexy this record makes me feel, but it does make me feel like getting high, so I guess we're half way there.... (SW)
(Rave Up, Via Montecuccoli 13-00176 Roma, ITALY, http://web.tiscalinet.it/raveup)

PROPAGANDHI/CRIA CUERVOS - "Live" split CD

I have always thought that PROPAGANDHI were the PC alter-egos of NOFX, and now I think CRIA CUERVOS are the French alter-egos of PROPAGANDHI. This is a live CD recorded in France. The sound quality is quite good for a live recording. The only downside is there are only five songs from each band. (DP)
(Diabolik, BP 4, 94111 Arcueil Cedex, FRANCE, www.dblk.fr.st)

PURGEN - "Toxidermists of Urban Madness" LP

Hailing from Moscow (that's in Russia-duh!) PURGEN tear through 13 tracks of fast punk that fans of modern spikey-top punk like the VIRUS, or A GLOBAL THREAT would adore, but this is even better. Ripping, anthemic, melodic hardcore with snotty vocals sung in Russian. This is really great stuff, and I only wish that I could see them perform these songs live. Maybe one day. PURGEN, once again proving that punk rock is global phenomenon that is doing quite well, despite those who continually proclaim its death! Awesome and totally worth tracking down. (MT)
(Roland Schuz, TangermŸnderstr. 1, 12627 Berlin, GERMANY, schulz.roland@berlin)

R.O.M. - "There Must Be a Way" CD

11 track disc with an atrocious layout and no address, so even when I tell you that it's awesome Japanese punk rock and roll, you can't order it, and if you see it in a store or distro, it looks so horrible that you won't think of buying it. Japanese punk along the lines of more recent FORWARD or the last ASSFORT record (but slower). Every song's an anthem, great sing-along parts and solos a-plenty. R.O.M. could get away with playing in a biker bar, but the punkers would all still get their rocks off, you know? Don't be turned off by the multi color cut and paste cover with the sunflower on it... *There Must Be a Way* is certainly worth your dollars (or yen, or whatever). (WN)
(Octopusscat)

RACEBANNON/SONG OF ZARATHUSTRA - split LP

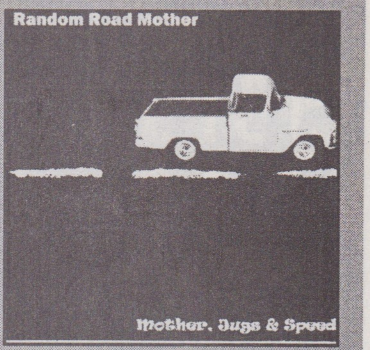
OK. What is up with the lo-fi noise mumbo-jumbo taking up the entire RACEBANNON side of this record? I had heard that they were sounding different these days, but this is just complete boring nonsense. At times they throw in something that resembles a song, but this "something" is just a sassy rant over a drumbeat. Very disappointing. As for the SONG OF ZARATHUSTRA side, I was pretty impressed. The same sort of upbeat, tight, blaring tunes (kinda like the MONORCHID on PCP) that appeared on their Sound Virus EP, but here the songs seem to be more developed and driving. "Spock Rock" or not, this is good stuff. (SP)
(Level Plane, PO Box 4329, Philadelphia, PA 19118, www.level-plane.com)

RADON - "We Bare All" CD

A collection of this band's first two EPs and live LP (with extra tracks) from the early 90s. I liked these guys when these records were coming out. Not quite pop-punk or emo. Almost that in-between sound of SAMIAM and CRIMPSHRINE. Good stuff. (RL)
(No Idea)

RANDOM ROAD MOTHER - "Mother, Jugs & Speed"

With songs like "Hockey Helmet" and "You Suck.com" and a sound that falls somewhere in between DEAD KENNEDYS, the MISFITS, and the HANSON BROTHERS, RANDOM ROAD MOTHER doesn't interest me in the least. It's solid. That's about it. OK. (WR)
(Pig Pile, 28 Rugg Rd, Allston, MA 02134)



RATOS DE PORÌO - "Onisciente Coletivo" CD

One the world's finest 80s hardcore bands, RATOS DE PORÌO haven't given up yet... This 15-song CD of all new songs is surprisingly better than I expected. They seem to be going for—in a very strange Brazilian way—the NYHC tough-guy sound. There isn't a trace of the raw, intense sound of their glory days, but they've maintained a fast, straightforward sound that at least isn't metal. I wouldn't buy this, but while listening to it I find myself wondering how much a copy of the Sub comp goes for on eBay these days... (VH)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141-9092)

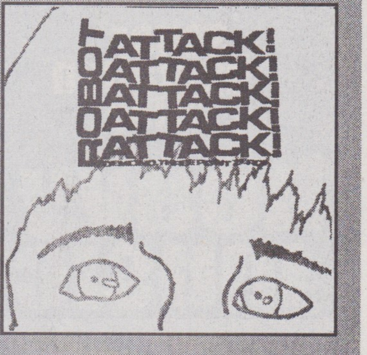
RATOS DE PORÃO
Onisciente Coletivo

RAZORS NEVER DIE - "Breadcrumbs to the Birds" CDEP

This four song CD is a fine little sampler for RAZORS. NEVER DIE By limiting the tracks they avoid filler, but I'm still not terribly impressed with this. They have a hook filled pop punk tune with lovesick whiny vocals, a self explanatory "I don't give a fuck about the kids," a ten second ditty and a rockin' UNDERTONES cover. Short and forgettable. (HM)
(RAZORS NEVER DIE, PO Box 1156, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866, razors_never_die@hotmail.com)

REACHING FORWARD - "Complete Discography 1998-2000" CD

Well the title sums it up, huh? REACHING FORWARD are (were?) one of the better straight-edge hardcore bands to emerge from the Dutch scene of the late 90s. Equal parts CHAIN OF STRENGTH and the first JUDGE EP, there's lotsa energy on this release, easily placing them in the same realm of quality as their American sXe contemporaries. Thirty-two tracks of positive hardcore. Nice SHAM 69 cover. (MT)
(Martyr, PO Box 955, Harriman, NY 10926-0955, www.martyrrecords.com)


ROBOT ATTACK!
ATTACK!
ATTACK!
ATTACK!
ATTACK!

REBELS - "Torn And Frayed - The Best of" CD

A "best of" for this British band that dates back to 1977. Although most of this was recorded in reunion status in the 90s, this is still a good dose of Brit punk in the UPSTARTS, SLF, UK SUBS styles. (RL)
(Trash, www.trash2001.de)

RED LONDON - "The Soundtrack of Our Lives" CD

This band were always a bit on the rock side for me back in the 80s, and to be honest, not too much has changed. I can't believe these guys are still plugging away after 20 years! They now have RED ALERT's Steve "Cast Iron" Smith on the vocals pipes, but the band hasn't inherited much of the Oi! sound of his other band. This sounds like the stuff STIFF LITTLE FINGERS were doing in the late 80s; rock with a punk edge. It's by no means bad (except for the unbelievably bad semi-acoustic number...yikes) but it just doesn't have enough balls for me. (TB)
(Trash 2001, PO Box 10 16 53, D-46216 Bottrop, GERMANY)

Role Models
Sister Mary Rotten Crotch
wrecked

REORGANIZE - "Nej Till Abort" EP

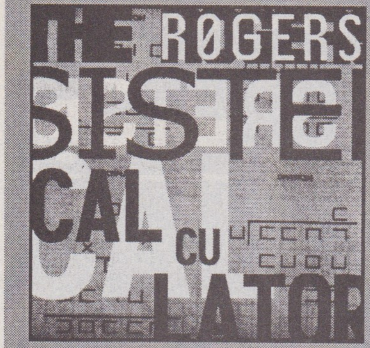
Raw. Crushing. Vicious. Intense. Pure unadulterated Scandinavian brutality. These are the thoughts that came to my head when the needle first hit the vinyl. Raw-throated vocals and distorted hardcore set to a driving beat—what more could you ask for? This is the perfect soundtrack to soaping up those liberty spikes. (WM)
(Nitskivor, nitskivor@hotmail.com)

REVILLOS - "Attack!" CD

A re-release, of sorts, of this post-REZILLOS band's second LP. I've never seen or heard of a second REVILLOS LP from the 80s. Apparently EMI remixed their demos, whipped up some packaging, and rush-released this. The band didn't take too kindly to that. Hence the scarcity of this release. Leave it to Captain Oi to save the day. This is close to the version the REVILLOS wanted out, with some bonus tracks. A strong release, too, with a fun, primal, campy feel. A release worth the wait. (RL)
(Captain Oi)

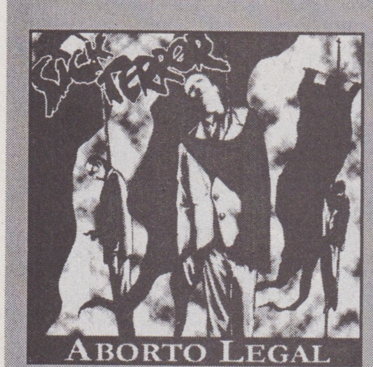
ROBOT ATTACK - "Demo Three Point Zero" EP

I have never seen so much effort go into the packaging of an EP. Screenprinted covers, about five different inserts, a booklet, and a little photo book with about fifteen actual photos bound together... But I'm such a sucker for those things! On to the music. ROBOT ATTACK is clearly influenced by any number of late-90s East Coast "screamo" bands. But of course, ROBOT ATTACK makes it a point to put a little spice in the mix, adding what seems like a pinch of all sorts of things to their sound. It's relatively straightforward and melodic at times, totally chaotic at others, and occasionally just plain silly. And with witty song titles like "Bikes Rule, Cars Drool," the later seems to be in completely good taste. Definitely a fun record. (SP)
(Square of Opposition, 2935 Fairview St, Bethlehem, PA 18020)



RUNNIN' RIOT
1. DIVIDED LOYALTIES
2. WORKIN' CLASS KILLING

seger liberation army
heavy music



ROLE MODELS/SISTER MARY ROTTEN CROTCH - “Wrecked” split CD

This starts out well with Chicago’s ROLE MODELS delivering catchy street punk with tons of guitar and sing-a-long choruses. The second half of the album sucks. Kansas’ SISTER MARY ROTTEN CROTCH sound as shitty as their name. (SR)
(Hooligan Empire, PO Box 10024, Kansas City, MO 64171, www.hooligan-empire.com)

THE ROGERS SISTERS - “Calculator/Object"

The A side is an angular, jerky original that also appears on their LP and may include handclaps. It reminds me a little of a punker B-52s. The B side is a CURE cover that I am afraid I didn’t recognize, but sounds better than anything I’ve ever heard by the CURE except maybe “Boys Don’t Cry” (I like that song because I’m sensitive). On the whole I thoroughly lapped up this taster and will be picking up their LP forthwith. (AM)
(Troubleman Unlimited, 16 Willow St, Bayonne, NJ 07002; www.troublemanunlimited.com)

RUDIMENTARY PENI - “Catastrophe” LP

Here are 27 live tracks recorded in 1982 by this legendary and unique 80s English punk rock band. Live albums aren’t usually my favorite but this is great! Surprisingly, the sound quality is quite good. (SR)
(no address)

RUIDO/SICK TERROR - split EP

SICK TERROR from Brazil goes straight for the throat with a fast and furious thrash attack. They tear through their songs with lots of reckless anger and aggression, even covering a NEGATIVE FX song. RUIDO follow suit with their own brand of crazed punk that is packed full of raging speed. Inside the record it says that the RUIDO tracks originally appeared on a split EP with TEZACRIFICO. I guess they thought they were so good that they should put them out again in case you missed them the first time around. (RC)
(Sin Fronteras, PO Box 8004, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

RUNNIN’ RIOT/TOWER BLOCKS - split EP

Yes!!! Belfast, Ireland’s RUNNIN’ RIOT share a brilliant seven inch split EP with Berlin, Germany’s TOWER BLOCKS. RUNNIN’ RIOT stick to two of the themes that are so important to Oi! music: union solidarity and working class oppression. Fucking great! TOWER BLOCKS win you over immediately with their solid punk-rock display on side two! Listen closely as TOWER BLOCKS demonstrate their superior singing and first rate guitar playing! This is a great split that you need to purchase right away! (BR)
(Rejected, PO Box 6591, Dun Laorie, Co. Dublin, IRELAND, www.rejectedireland.cjb.net)

RUNNING LIKE THIEVES - “Same Time Next Year” CD

Six songs from this ex-BOLD, ex-SUPERTOUCH outfit. With the name like RUNNING LIKE THIEVES, I was really hoping that this band would sound like the last BOLD 7” . That is seriously one of my favorite four-song 7” s of all time, so I had really high expectations. While musically it reminds me of the 7” , Matt’s vocals aren’t as strong as I wish they were. It could be the production, or it could be that Matt is just a little rusty. Regardless, this CD isn’t too bad for a debut. I am definitely looking forward to the 7” that is coming out with Impact Fanzine #2. (CC)
(Livewire, PO Box 007, Mendham, NJ 07945)

SCATHA/THE DAGDA - split EP

Both bands are solid, heavy mid-tempo crust with a Pagan preoccupation. Musically, I would say THE DAGDA comes out on top. Since they’re actually from the Isles, I’ll assume a genuine connection to the Gaelic/Celtic imagery, but I have to say, it’s not my thing—outside of the realm of fiction, I’m turned off by mysticism and religious symbolism, however vague. In talking about power, gender, or ecology, even on a punk record, keep those gods and goddesses out of the mix. (AC)
(Crime Scene, 82 Colston St, Box 13, BS1 5BB, UK, bodybag13@hotmail.com)

SEEIN’ RED/SHIKARI - split 10”

If you’ve somehow been missed European hardcore legends SEEIN’ RED, now’s the perfect time to check them out, as they bring us nine more songs of devastating hardcore played with just as much, if not more, passion and energy as they had in LÅRM twenty years ago. It’s amazing how they continue to deliver so much rage and fury in each song, doing it with such ease that it seems as effortless as tying their shoes. Fucking perfection! SHIKARI, from the Netherlands, assault us with well-executed blasts of anger and emotion, showing that they too know a little bit about the science of hardcore. Their formula of high-pitched screams of desperation laid over a cloud of discordant guitars and relentlessly fast drumming is similar to REVERSAL OF MAN or ORCHID when they were in their respective heydays. One hell of a record... (VH)
(Deadlock, PO Box 324, 7900 AH Hoogevenn, NETHERLANDS, www.deadlock.nl)

SEGER LIBERATION ARMY - “Heavy Music/Chain Smokin’” 45

....a tribute to the king of mid-60s Detroit white-boy soul. There seems to be a revival in the magic of old BOB SEGER music these days and I ain’t complaining either!!!!! All the young kids have been spinning SEGER at the clubs...... just goes to show you that there are some people who are REALLY INTO FUCKING out there and aren’t afraid to let the world know it!!!! Cuz I’ll tell ya, baby, you could really fuck good and hard to selected SEGER SYSTEM cuts....nasty sex too!!!! I’m glad the kids are hip to SEGER.... more teenage sex and drug use is what I promote!!!! Anyway, about this record; it’s basically an all-star single featuring my favorite session man and bass player JIM DIAMOND who I think RULES!!! This record doesn’t have the power of the original numbers, but the spirit is there....I mean how can you give somebody as great as BOB SEGER the “perfect” blowjob anyway??? (SW)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20196, www.bigneckrecords.com)

SICK TERROR - "Aborto Legal" EP

This record punched me in the throat before I put the needle down. The lyrics on these ten songs are so incredibly angry, it is impossible to explain. SICK TERROR lash out at everybody; scene police, self righteous vegans and political snobs, religion, pro-lifers... no one is free from scorn. "Welcome to the new world/To the free America market/That fetid beggar will put you down and fuck your ass/It's useless to run/It's useless to cry" (from "Grilled Rockefeller"). They demand that you shove everything from credit cards to RATTUS CDs up your ass, and I feel a little frightened after just reading the words, even though they were all exceptionally nice fellows when we met last year. Musically, *Aborto Legal* picks up right where last year's split with LEGION 666 left off, ultra intense hardcore that is right down your throat from beginning to end. It sounds just as angry as the lyrics, and this is perhaps their best release to date. Awesome! (WN)
(Terrotten, a/c Renan Favero, C.P. 8080, Porto Allegre, RS 90201-970 BRASIL)

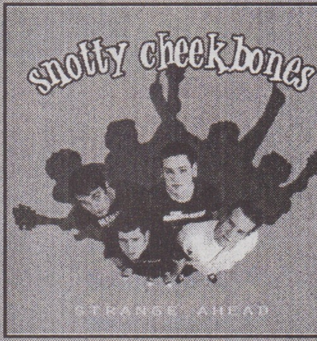
SIVIILIMURHA/UNDER THREAT - split LP

Raw-as-hell recording from Finland's SIVIILIMURHA. I can't tell if it's a live show or a practice—clues to both are evident. Either way the recording quality isn't all that great, but it in no way hinders my appreciation for their brand of core. Fast drumming, distorted riffing, and the vocals are so low in the mix that for the most part it sounds like an instrumental band. For what it matters, the printed lyrics are in Finnish. I enjoyed their material but the recording quality would probably turn a lot of people off. The flip is a recording of UNDER THREAT, from Brazil, playing live in 1994. Their side has a nominally better quality to it, with my main complaint being that the bass is too high, the drums a bit too low, and the guitar is lost in a buzz of distortion and is buried under the bass—but what you do want when it's recorded "just using a cheap tape recorder with no microphones"? Lo-fi hardcore with a singer that just screeches and squawks in a garbled grindcore way. Overall, they were pretty uninteresting to me, but that's more likely got a lot to do with the recording quality. What really confuses me is that given the sound quality, they still chose to release this on some of the thickest white vinyl I've seen in some time. Fans of demo tapes and shitty live recordings might be interested. In fact, I'd probably would like their stuff more if it was on a cassette instead of the vinyl format. (WM)
(Destroy, PO Box 1122, BS99 2HX, Bristol, ENGLAND)

SMALLBROWN BIKE x THE CASKET LOTTERY

SMALL BROWN BIKE/CASKET LOTTERY - "...Not a Split, It's a Collaboration" CDEP

Two Midwestern power pop punk bands, six songs, and one CD. SMALL BROWN BIKE has been around for years—you most likely know at this point if you like 'em or not. If you're not sure, they sound sort of like SUPERCHUNK, HEY MERCEDES, and HOT WATER MUSIC. CASKET LOTTERY doesn't stray too far from the program either, with their WEEZER, HEY MERCEDES, DAG NASTY, PROMISE RING agenda—mixed with a dash of SUNNY DAY REAL ESTATE vocals. These boys are good at what they do; that is, playing tight pop music with a clean sound. It seems like they've put their hearts into this project ...even if it could be the soundtrack to the next summer teen movie. (AS)
(Second Nature, PO Box 11543, Kansas City, MO 64138 www.secondnaturerecordings.com)



SNOTTY CHEEKBONES - "Strange Ahead" CD

This isn't nearly as awful as I thought it would be. Fast paced pop punk that doesn't sound like every other pop punk band. This is actually a very pleasant surprise. Don't let their pretty boy looks fool you, these cats can deliver. Fans of Stardumb records should pay some notice. (BM)
(Brat, IM Lindenacher 23, 8303 Bassersdorf, SWITZERLAND, www.bartrecords.com)

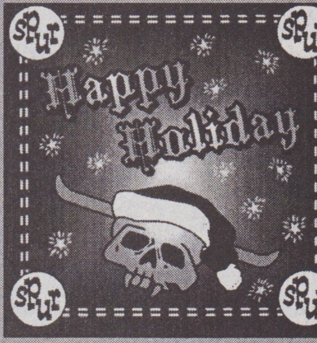
SNUKY TATE - "Who Cares?" EP

Long one of the most elusive and rewarding Bay Area punk records, the SNUKY TATE 7" gets the reissue treatment. Picture: late 70s, local insane scenester gets the SF-based MUTANTS to back him up on this 7" , and like most toss-off projects it succeeds wildly. The MUTANTS don't sound anything like this on any of their rather hesitant new wave recordings, sorry, but I'll bet dollars to doughnuts this 7" was ignored totally at the time. Four raving lunatic punk songs with really loud buzzsaw guitars, with nary a weak track in (sight). Only complaint: hey, BLAMMO guy, how about springing for actual sleeves instead of these cheapo Xerox jobs? The wimpy UK powerpop records get respect...c'mon!!! (RW)
(Blammo, try www.knowcrap.com)

SONIC TALLYWACKER

SONIC TALLYWHACKER - "Swallow the Leader" CD

I can't believe there's a band named SONIC TALLYWACKER. I can't believe I'm being forced to listen to a CD by a band named SONIC TALLYWACKER called "Swallow the Leader." This is beyond not funny. It's painful, in fact. SONIC TALLYWACKER are a crappy rock band I can see playing in some bar with one or two stinking drunks dancing around and waving their arms while everyone else is waiting for the next shitty band to play. (DP)
(Regal Beegle, PO Box 13, Frostburg, MD 21532, www.regalbeegle.com)



SPUR - "Happy Holiday" CDEP

This is the second three song X-Mas holiday CD SPUR has put out. SPUR dish up these tunes in a mid tempo RAMONES style. "Happy Holiday" is sooooo nice for the whole family. "Silent Nite" as a rock traditional, and "Merry Mayhem" never gets vile or vulgar. A little too nice and sincere about enjoying the holidays. (HM)
(Spurific/Spur, PO Box 2120, Fairfax, VA 22031, www.spurific.com)

THE STITCHES - "12 Imaginary Inches" LP

I spent some time in the LA area over New Year's Eve, and I was disappointed. Instead of streets filled with punk rockers in muscle cars and hot rods blaring the STITCHES, it was all shaven-headed, Black Flys-sportin' bros in jacked-up trucks with No Fear stickers jamming SUBLIME at top volume. It's been a few years since I spent any quality time with the STITCHES. From the opening bars of this album I'm wondering where I went wrong. This LP still has some of that grab-you-by-the-throat urgency of their earliest releases- if you're into anthemic, snotty, nasal, SoCal punk rock, you need to get this. (AM)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St #303, Richmond, VA 23221; www.tkorecords.com)

straighttoyo
swingers, winos, and sunday school teachers

STOOL SAMPLE/LOVED BY NONE - "Scumpunk Foreplay" EP

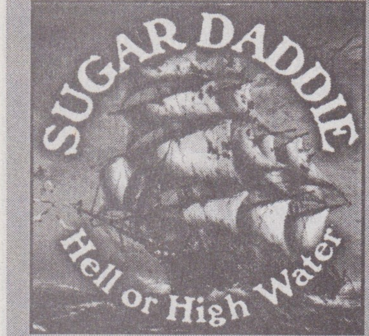
STOOL SAMPLE are not good. They really seem to deeply hate women to the point of murder. If it's a joke, it is not funny. Musically, they sound like a Southern-fried SLAPSHOT as well as a gruff VERBAL ASSAULT. LOVED BY NONE are soundin' a bit like early SUICIDAL TENDENCIES, except not good. The singer wishes he could sing like El Duce, but he can't. Fuck this record. (JA)

(Stool Sample, PMB #82, 4290 Bells Ferry Rd, STE#106, Kennesaw, GA 30144)

STRAIGHT TO YOUR BRAIN - "Swingers, Winos, and Sunday School Teachers" CD

Wisconsin power-trio hardcore with harsh vocals, chunky guitars and bass, driving rhythms, interesting lyrical structures, some shout-along action, and a bit of guitar wankery—nothing detrimental though. 'Tis well-played hardcore that's diverse enough so that every song doesn't sound the same, but there's something in their sound that doesn't sit right with me. Perhaps it's the polished aspect of their skills as musicians—it's obvious they can play their instruments well and maybe that's what's missing to my ears: a rough, raw edge that I expect—no!—demand with my 'core. But again, that's me and my tastes. 18 songs in 28 minutes. According to their website history thing, they used to be a ska band and they don't like playing that anymore and now they play hardcore. I don't know, you tell me if they're joking or not. Overall, I can see many people really digging this band. (WM)

(Almost Good Music, PO Box 2233, Fond du Lac, WI 54936-2233, www.almostgoodmusic.com)



SUBINCISION - "Berkeley's Newest Hitmakers" CD

All of a sudden I feel like I'm fifteen, and in a really bad way... SUBINCISION play five songs of upbeat, quirky, over-produced pop punk that has a "rockin" edge to it. The songs are catchy, but I'd avoid catching any of SUBINCISION the say way I'd avoid catching gonorrhea. (VH)

(Substandard, PO Box 310, Berkeley, CA 94701)

SUGAR DADDIE - "Hell or High Water" CD

Holy shit, this could be it. The single worst album I have ever heard in my life. People, you can not fucking believe how bad this record is, but to give you an idea—it's even worse than the band's choice of moniker. What's happening here is total CLUTCH cloning. Man, if the singer of SUGAR DADDIE could get a hold of Neil Fallon (singer of CLUTCH)'s cock, he would give it a tongue-lathering the likes of which would immortalize him in porn mythology for ages to come. The idiosyncratic nursery-rhyme fuckery that CLUTCH managed to somehow pull-off convincingly a decade ago does not age well, especially when it's ripped-off half-assed-ly. How's this for a lunch-losing lyrical tidbit, "How many licks does it take to get to the center of a tootsie pop? Well Mr. Owl I don't give a fuck." This shit is so aggravatingly bad it would make the Dalai Lama want to smack 'em and say, "What were you thinking?" (EL)

(Thorp, PO Box 6786, Toledo, OH 43612, www.thorprecords.com)

SUPERHELiCOPTER LTD
WHITE NIGGER ROCK 'N' ROLL

SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS - "Det Ar Synd Om Dom Rika" EP

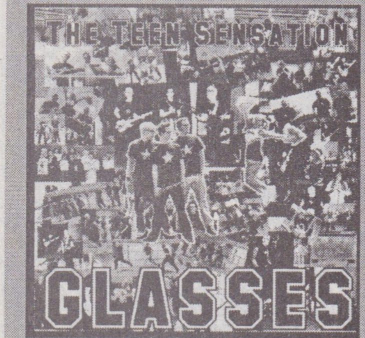
Sweden really knows how to breed thick-crusted hardcore like no other nation, and it seems that these days you could probably toss a rock—not throw, toss—and hit a band that plays raging hardcore, of one style or another, that will get your neck snapping in time. SUNDAY MORNING EINSTEINS are no different from their many country-mates, aside from having a unique name for their style, and come equipped with a damn good recording of four blasting tunes of raging Dis-worship, but with that ever so special Scandinavian feel to it that makes this 20-year-old style of 'core still seem relevant. By the end of the EP I was a convert. (WM)

(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892, www.prankrecords.com)

SUPERHELICOPTER LTD. - "Blow My Cool/Honey Bunny"

Well, I for one am glad there are more SUPERHELICOPTER LTD. recordings to be released, even though I was told ten months ago that they had called it quits. On the other hand, how many times do MRR readers need me to tell them how fantastic this band is? If you haven't believed me up to this point, why should I bother trying to convince you? Stop reading now. For the rest, this is another great record. "Blow My Cool" is a dirty garage tune and "Honey Money" is a bluesy, trashed-out instrumental. Wonderful as always. (CK)

(High School Refuse, Berlageweg 12, 9731 LN Groningen, NETHERLANDS, ktvs@yahoo.com)



TEEN IDOLS/ SQUIRTGUN - split CD

I loved the first TEEN IDOLS album, but unfortunately they have really never lived up to that potential and have been very mediocre since. SQUIRTGUN never really did it for me in the first place, despite the SCREECHING WEASEL link. I think what you get here is more of a collaboration than a straight-up split release, as all the songs (four in all) have similar backing vocals. (AD)

(no address)

TEEN SENSATION "Glasses" - CD

Oh, dear god no. Everything about this band and this CD makes me embarrassed to even listen to pop punk. What is wrong with you people?? Do you not understand what makes good pop punk? This is down right stupid, pointless and makes my tummy turn. When you write a song avoid the generic clichés, and for the love of god, Ibenez guitars are not rock and roll. Anyone playing an Ibenez in a pop punk band is on my shit list... fuck it, anyone playing an Ibenez is on my shit list. Fuck this band and destroy this CD. (BM)

(Whoa Oh, 52 McLoughlin Str, Glen Cove, NY 11542, www.woaohrecords.com)

TERMINUS VICTOR - "Mastering the Revels" CD

Singular. Unique. Like nothing else. Highly evocative of a certain era of time. An example of their particular aesthetic bent. Unforgettable. All this and more. Sheesh. Words fail me...a band completely ready to open for JANE'S ADDICTION at the Stone circa 1987. (RW)

(www.terminusvictor.com)

TERROR - "Don't Need Your Help" EP

This is the hyped band in California right now due in large part because of their members' previous endeavors. Containing the guitarist from LA's own CARRY ON, and the vocalist from New York's BURIED ALIVE, TERROR bring you two songs of heavy-as-fuck hardcore on a one-sided 7". Being a fan of Todd Jones' songwriting with CARRY ON, I wasn't expecting so much of a moshy NYHC feel—still, this band is very good as what they do. The vocals take a little getting used to (I never thought BURIED ALIVE was that good). People expecting the positive, more fast-paced style of CARRY ON might be turned off, but if you are looking for a mid-paced band with intense breakdowns and pissed-as-all-hell vocals, look no further. (CC)
(Takeover 7040 Haskell Ave. #102, Van Nuys, CA 91406)

THE THIRTEENS - "Swallow" CD

Pretty run-of-the-mill weird pop punk stuff here. Just some songs that don't seem like they ever really needed to be written. Bad layout with pixelation. They all look like pretty nice guys, if a little stoned. Just nothing really grabs me here. (WR)
(King Bee, PO Box 1164, Denver, CO 80201)

THIS IS MY FIST! - "I Don't Want to Startle You but They Are Going to Kill Most of Us" EP

The anticipated first EP from one of the best—and arguably the foxiest— new Bay Area band. Guitarist and singer Annie, vet of Chicago's underrated AMBITION MISSION, writes consistently tuneful and passionate songs, though I would have vetoed the buttery production that softened the idiosyncratic barbs in her voice. THIS IS MY FIST! is already up with the best of "crusty pop" punk bands, with irresistible, emotionally accessible tunes that still bare fangs. (AC)
(Left Off The Dial, PO Box 3941, Oakland, CA 94609)

THROWBACK - "Burning Bridges & Building Walls" EP

Wall-of-sound bludgeon fest in low-tune minor. The great production on this small slab of death makes them sound like they must be 20 feet tall with amps built from houses. Six heavy thrash songs from this Finnish crust destruction unit equal a total ferocious assault on your ears. I believe that this is their debut release and it's pretty damn strong, considering. Check 'em out. (WM)
(S.U.P.O., PL 83, 90101 Uolo, FINLAND, www.suporecords.com)

TOY DOLLS - "One More Megabyte" CD

This came out five or six years ago. If you've ever heard the TOY DOLLS then you pretty much know what to expect from this album, as they really haven't changed much in twenty years. Totally over-the-top spastic pop with manic vocals. I can only listen to the TOY DOLLS for so long before I having to lie down in a dimly lit room—in fact, the third track's not even over and I've had enough, this review is over. (AD)
(Captain Oi!)

TRAGEDY - "Vengeance" LP

Take the destroying intensity of their debut LP, add the melody that made their 7" so unique, up the production on the recording, and you've got the Vengeance LP. Just when you think you're getting a melodic, gentle kiss on the cheek, TRAGEDY waits until your eyes are closed and your lips are puckered to box your ears and rip your testicles off. If this is your first introduction to this Portland, Oregon band, then imagine shouting and growled vocals (very similar to a lot of the classic Japanese hardcore bands) spouting apocalyptic lyrics over pounding bass lines and plodding drumming. Like the *Can We Call This Life* EP, the layout of this LP is very well done. The booklet is absolutely beautiful. Songs like "The Day After" and the title track are just fucking awesome epics of destruction. I am admittedly not familiar with most of the Scandinavian or Japanese bands that TRAGEDY claims as influences, however I can say that this record is way better than anything HIS HERO IS GONE ever did. (CC)
(Tragedy, 2336 N. Killingsworth, Portland, OR 97217)

THE TRANSPLANTS - "Vegetable Stew" LP

This late-70s Boston band hints at the amazing richness of the Boston punk scene. The TRANSPLANTS are not unlike the QUEER PILLS in their vocals and general spirit, but the guitars are more fully fleshed out on these tracks. Individual songs may lack distinctiveness, but the band's early punk sound is incredibly evocative, and their songs a whole lot of fun. Definitely above average. (SS)
(Rave Up, Via Montecuccoli 13, 00176 Rome, ITALY)

DER TRICK IST ZU ATMEN - "Kopf Herz Beine" EP

Whoa, right off the bat I can tell that this band has been listening to some LEATHERFACE and perhaps a little mid-period JAWBREAKER. What I am talking about is some emotional heartfelt punk rock that at least by the German sung vocals, sounds like it may have more than a little sense of the tragic. Now that I have described the music, I must say that there is some first-rate packaging on this release. The cover is a foldout sleeve, with four-color processing on the inside, yet on the outside looks like a typical German hardcore release. Definitely worth picking up a copy. (JF)
(Twisted, Reutwig 1A, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY, www.Twisted-Chords.de)

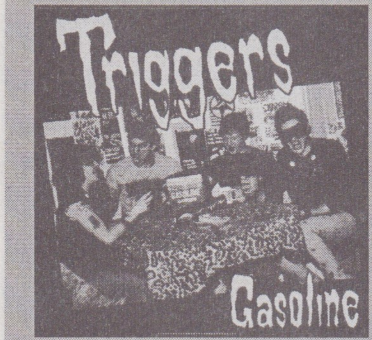
TRIGGERS - "Gasoline" EP

I like it when bands include a little "bio" with their records. In fact, if you'd like to just go ahead and write your own review, that'd make the process simpler still. All kidding aside, this is fucking great record. When you've got a woman singing about drinking gasoline and the song is as catchy as hell, but not at all wimpy, you know you've got a winner. When you flip the (yellow) vinyl over and find two more songs that are equally catchy, including an EYES cover, it's hard to imagine that things could get much better. This really is some good shit. So, what did I get out of the "bio"? They're from Portland. Woo hoo. (KK)
(Vinyl Warning, PO Box 2991, Portland, OR, 97208-2991)

The Thirteens

THIS IS MY FIST!

THE TOY DOLLS
one more
megabyte



TROPIEZO
(des)composicion sensorial

TROPIEZO/ACTITUD SUBVERSIVA - "(Des)composicion Sensorial" split CD

Puerto Rico's ACTITUD SUBVERSIVA gives us 6 political punk rock tunes about religion, government, and cops. Also from P.R., TROPIEZO delivers quality hardcore with good breakdowns-all in Spanish. This is an impressive D.I.Y production with lyrics sheets, lots of contact info. and interactive videos on the disc for your computer. (SR)

($8 ppd: Felix Santiago, Calle Del Pilar #51 Apt.6, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00928, dovercalin@aol.com)

UNCLE CHARLES - "Action Speaks Louder Than Words" EP

Hailing from Sweden, this five-piece valiantly continues in the great tradition of that country's many hardcore heroes. Thick, thick guitar sound, dual vocals—one high, one low—sociopolitical lyrics, mid-tempo speed. Are they doing anything new and challenging? No, but if you're a fan of Swedish hardcore then you'll find much to like with this EP. A nice stencil-style cover of an angry mob overturning a cop car and hoisting burning materials—to form an effective barricade, I'm assuming—made this reviewer smile. Also comes with two paper stickers: inserts and extras are always welcome. (WM)

(914, ninefourteenrecords@hotmail.com)

UNKIND - "Mieliemme Tuhkasta" CD

Dark, moody, thick crust-informed hardcore—chunky guitars over heavy, pulsating bass-lines; cascading drumbeats pummeling rhythms from the dark winter nights of Finland; all the while, multiple voices crying out thick and burly chants of some of the most positive lyrics I've ever heard/read set to such dark and powerful (angry) music. "In the beginning of time it was given to us, as time wore on it was harnessed, in the haste of success it was forgotten, from the ashes of our time, from the ashes of our minds, rises the will to live life, there's still time before the sunset, there are plenty of things undone, there's life that has not been lived, sunrise a new day, everything can be different, your own life, your own faith, not tied down to anything." Sung in Finnish, of course. Seriously, this song is epic—from the call and response guitar riffing to the four-minute acoustic guitar and tribal drum ending—this CD worth it for just this song alone. This is an excellent release and a great introduction for me to this band. (WM)

(Yellow Dog, PO Box 550208, 10372 Berlin, GERMANY, www.yellowdog.de)

UTTER BASTARD/IRRITATE - split CD

I find it a little strange to see San Francisco's own UTTER BASTARD with 30 songs on this split CD. UTTER BASTARD has not been around for years, but yet here they are on another new release. They play pretty standard grindcore. A variation of tempos comes into play from mid-paced to explosive speed. Their music is not bad but it definitely didn't blow me away. IRRITATE on the other hand play a horrid style of generic grind. It is basically one mid-tempo riff played over and over as the singer growls and grunts. You know the last thing I saw UTTER BASTARD do was a split with the Finnish band CAUSE FOR EFFECT and CAUSE FOR EFFECT were really bad too. Maybe there is a pattern developing here. (RC)

(Hostile Regression, PO Box 37, 55801 Immature, FINLAND)

VIBRATORS - "Energize" CD

Fuck, these guys have been around forever, I can't believe they've got a new record out. The first song sounds like bad DAMNED, and that's pretty bad. Luckily it picks up from there—very catchy poppy punk like you would expect from the VIBRATORS. The cover art is fuckin' awful, and if I was Knox, Eddie, or Tart, there's no way I'd want to have photos of myself in the public domain, but it has to be said that all in all, this is not too bad for a bunch of old farts. (AD)

(Track, no address)

LOS VILLAINS - "No Estas Solo/Cinco de Mayo"

Is that a harmonica? LA punk with a Latin feel, fast and rockin' with lyrics in Spanish, and like I said, a harmonica. Cool. (AD)

(Los Villains, 12405 Venice Blvd.#265, Los Angeles, CA 90066)

VIOLATORS - "Gun Control" LP

Murky, swampy greatness. Unfortunately, the murkiness obscures the greatness. Late 70s Denver-area punk action via these club-storming punkers, with tracks like "End of My Rope," "Black Death" and "Epileptic Seizure". I will state that seeing these guys rip through their STOOGES covers in 1979 would've been a veritable brain-fry, but on vinyl in 2003 it's just too remote for me. No studio tracks on this one makes it weak on the context front. Hey, KBD reissue guys! When are you going to go after MATT GIMMICK's pre-1976 band, the PUNKS? That shit is amazing! Go get 'em! (RW)

(Rave Up, Via Montecuccoli 13-00176, Rome, ITALY)

VIOLENT RAMP - "Grind the Pigs" EP

Raw-as-fuck skate trash that almost sounds like it could have been recorded on a boombox. Most of the songs are pretty simple lyrically and musically, with song topics covering a wide range of things such as paying to skate, skating on cops, skating on violent ramps, and so on. Their Michigan pride is apparent in their tribute song about the Alva skater Bill Danforth (also making a reference to the NEGATIVE APPROACH insert where Danforth is diving off a PA speaker). Lyrics to their theme song are as follows: "Fuck your little pussy ramp/Daddy built your pussy ramp/Ride get gnarly nails 'n' bricks/Can't even land your flippy pussy tricks" Interesting... (CC)

(PO Box 7496 Ann Arbor, MI 48107)

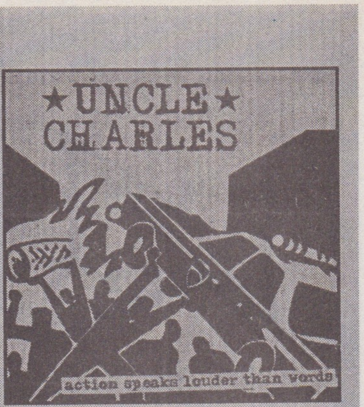
WASTED - "Down and Out" LP

Strong Finnish punk that sounds like a cross between BOMBSHELL ROCKS, MANIFESTO JUKEBOX, the GC5, and maybe a little SMALLTOWN. That's very good. This is very good. Lots of catchy riffs, hooks, earnest vocals, and solid tunes in general make this officially the best thing I've heard in a few months. Super. (AD)

(Scene Police, CO Humboldstr. 15, 531155 Bonn, GERMANY, www.scenepolice.com)

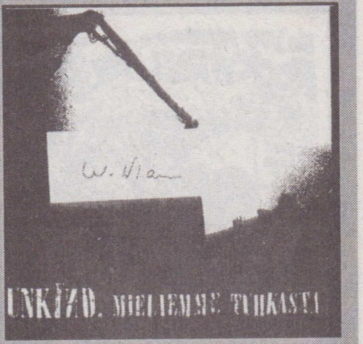
WHITE FLAG - "T is for 20" LP

Mullets, moustaches, make-up, shades, silly hats, and hair spray, WHITE FLAG were freaks. At various times they looked like the NEW YORK DOLLS, JOURNEY, CHEAP TRICK, or fuckin' FLEETWOOD MAC, but they always rocked. I love WHITE FLAG, have done since I first heard them a long time ago. Coming from Sunnymead, California and transplanted into the dark underbelly of the LA hardcore scene, WHITE FLAG played fast ultra catchy punk with a 60s feel, like Lennon and McCartney on speed and malt liquor. They played so many covers, and did them so well, that the line between what is, and what isn't a cover becomes blurred and you're just left with a great hardcore psychedelic hybrid. A while back I found a WHITE FLAG CD under Floyd's bed and I've been wondering what happened to these guys since. Apparently they never broke up and are planning a European tour. This compilation features a cross section of material from the earlier more straight-forward hardcore to the later poppier "Suicide King" stuff, all with a great sense of humor and boundless energy. The cover of the JAM's "In the City" sang in Spanish ("En La Ciudad") is worth the price of admission alone, as is the cover of KATE BUSH's "Wuthering Heights." Also included is a new song dedicated to Dee Dee Ramone and some old previously unreleased demo tracks. I could go on all day about how much I like WHITE FLAG but suffice to say that if you've never heard them, do yourself a favor and get this (the CD has twice as many tracks) and if you don't like it just keep listening to it until you do, because you will, oh yes, you will... (AD)
(Soundflat, PO Box 102226, 42766 Haan, GERMANY)


★UNCLE★
CHARLES
action speaks louder than words

WORN THIN - "Time's Up" EP

Newer hardcore bands tend to digest the whole history of the genre and then spit out their best attempt at synthesizing all of that knowledge. Some bands, like the LAB RATS, have enough life, smarts, and ingenuity to make it work and create something fun. You really won't find any of those three things here. The music sounds careless when it should be tight, the lyrics are clichéd and vague when they should be relevant, and the arrangements really don't offer anything new. I give the singer credit for having a good voice (not macho, not whiny, not barking, just good), but when he's using it to tell dissenters to "get the fuck out" of his country, I kind of just want to smack him. (MX)
(Malfunction, no address, www.wornthin.net)

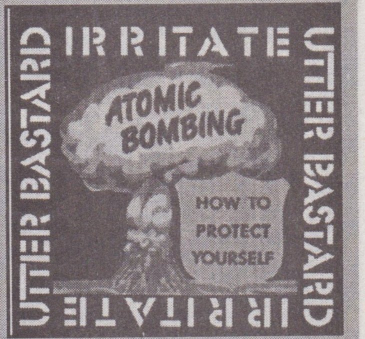


WORTHLESS UNITED - CDEP

Four-track EP that sounds like RANCID in a rumble with ANN BERETTA. It's well-played, anthemic, and catchy, but just doesn't move me. Eight years ago I would have been all over this, but too many RANCID clones have passed under the bridge for me to get excited about another one. (TB)
(Chunksaah, PO Box 974, New Brunswick, NJ 08903)

YOUTH GONE MAD - "(Featuring Dee Dee Ramone)" LP

This is exactly what I expected, snotty punk and some songs about girls by Dee Dee. This isn't essential and the picture disc is very ugly. It's not bad, most of the songs are pretty decent but it's not anything we haven't heard before. (BM)
(Trend is Dead)



ZEROID - LP

Doomy depressive German hardcore influenced by the likes of NEUROSIS and HIS HERO IS GONE, with touches of ONE EYED GOD PROPHECY minor-key melody. Relatively long and slower songs with lyrics in German, this is all quite angry, heavy, and epic-sounding, but most of these songs didn't really frost my mini-wheats, instead blending into one numbing monochromatic wash. Still, there are some lively moments when the tempo picks up, so ardent fans of the style will probably be happy enough. (EL)
(Hellache, PO Box 10 58 24, D-28058 Bremen, GERMANY, hellache@web.de)

ZEROID - 10"

German metalcore that brings me back to a few years ago when CAROL, SYSTRAL, ZORN and MORSER ruled the land. Anthemic from start to finish, ZEROID play powerful emotional hardcore with heavy goth influences and plenty of melody to keep everything interesting. Like URANUS with almost none of the fast parts. Eight songs here, with twelve more on their LP that also came in this month, ZEROID have exploded on this side of the water, and I hope their onslaught continues. (WN)
(Unsociable, PO Box 10 58 24, 28058 Bremen, GERMANY, hellache@web.de)

V/A - "Action Speaks Louder...Than Words" LP

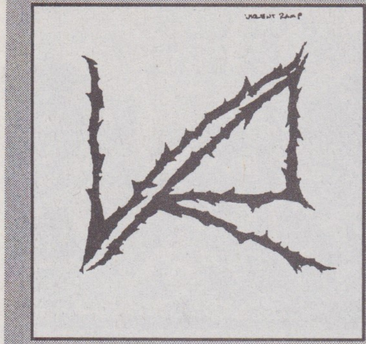
What a fucking excellent political punk rock compilation! Great tracks from around the world: WASTED, MDC, SIN DIOS, FLEAS & LICE, RATOS DE PORAO, OI POLLOI, APATIA NO, POLICE BASTARD, BELLICOSI, KLASSE KRIMINALE, SIXTY STORIES, PETROGRAD, PUAGH, RIFU, KOYAANISQATSI, ACTION DIRECTE, and TV SMITH. Get this now!!! (SR)
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY, info@twisted-chords.de)

V/A - "Adios Joey Ramone" CD

23 Japanese bands give tribute to the RAMONES. Standouts are FASTCARS ("Swallow My Pride"), TV IDOLS ("Chinese Rocks"), OVER DRIVE ("Beat on the Brat"), JET BOYS ("53rd & 3rd") to name just a few. MISSILES, SUPERSNAZZ, GIMMES, DISGUSTEENS, 5678's.....A good tribute. (DP)
(Motor Machine Gun, no address)

V/A - "I Hope the End Is Always the Beginning" CD

A cool concept from Snuffy Smile, where each band first does an original and the second time around, they do a cover. So you get bands such as the URCHIN, SPRAYPAINT, and NAVEL covering the likes of CHELSEA, MEGA CITY 4, and the REPLACEMENTS. Great cover selections make this comp a keeper. (RL)
(Snuffy Smile)



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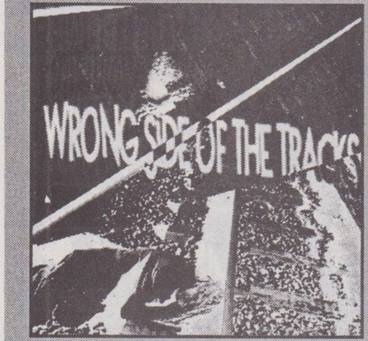

WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACKS

V/A - "Killed By Finnish Hardcore: Raw, Rare Hardcore '81-'85" LP

This incredible compilation of vintage Finnish hardcore features most of the major bands at their very best, as well as a few surprising obscurities. Among the bona fide classics: KOHU 63's "Sotaa," the DESTRUCKTIONS' blistering "Injustice," NUKKETEATTERI with their crunching jewel, "Lopettkaa!"...then there are relative unknowns like POHJASAKKA, NATO, and ALVOPROTEESI. I could go on, but you get the idea; this one's so thick with music that the record grooves start to vanish. Of course, it's best to have all the original records; but this is an outstanding sampling of 30 bands guaranteed to get you hoppin'. Strongly recommended. (SS)

(Redrum, Box 237, Hell, NORWAY)

V/A - "Last Stop New Haven" CD

Six bands from Connecticut: SWAGGERTS, 3 FINGER DEMON, BEER SCOUTS OF AMERICA, GROOVSKI, VULTURES, BATTLECATS, and DEFCON 5—all playing different punker genres. You've got rockabilly, garage, punk'n'roll, DISCHARGE, weird DEAD MILKMEN style, and finally, the brilliance of the Polish GROOVSKI, who play weird futuristic robot music—maybe like WIRE or DEVO. Pretty decent release, good representation of some of the stuff happening in Connecticut ...get this for the GROOVSKI. (AS)

(Monkey Power, PMB 113, 1440 Whalley Ave, New Haven, CT 06511, www.monkeypowerrecords.com)

V/A - "Let's Get Killed" LP

I have mentioned this before, but it bears repeating—when putting out a compilation, please put the track listing on the record's label. If that is too much, please list which bands are on side A and side B on the recording. It makes it a lot easier. That being said, what we have here are 13 bands playing melodic sometimes out-of-tune punk rock that is full of energy. Most of it is poppy, some of it is bad (PLAYPANTS), some of it is just bizarre (WRED FRIGHT), and some of it is pretty darn good (RADAR SECRET). If you like punk played with enthusiasm you will probably find something on this comp, but it is by no way a All Quiet On The Western Front or even a modern version of *A Can Of Pork.* (JF)

($8 ppd: Cock Punch, 614 1/2 N. Matua St, Kent, OH 44240)

V/A - "News of the World" CD

No this isn't the latest JAM tribute. As the cover says, it's "mod/soul/power pop/retro rock 'n' roll." Mostly mod, power pop and garage R 'n' R to these ears. Includes bands like the ODD NUMBERS, DURANGO 95, DATSONS, and the UK's HOTWIRES. Good stuff, but why only 11 tracks? For me to get jazzed about a comp, I need at least 20 tracks. Especially on a CD. A strong collection, but next time keep it coming.

($10 ppd: Howitzer, PO Box 7445, Richmond, VA 23221, www.howitzerrecords.tripod.com)

V/A - "Possessed to Skate: Vol. 2" 10"

Yes! What gods blessed me this month? I oughtta kiss Tim Brooks on his bald head. Although I don't skate (I can't keep balance on one of those boards), I do understand the appeal of it, and so I feel like I can judge this comp fairly. And damn, what a good fucking comp. This time there are only four bands, but each rocks in it's own way. The ETA stuff is the best stuff I have heard by them. There are three songs which are all good in different ways, plus a GANG GREEN cover. The LIFE SET STRUGGLE stuff is good, fairly simple punk hardcore, which I like, although not as much as the other comp tracks I have heard by them. The BREAKFAST songs are fucking great hyper-fast thrash, stuff—I think I like better than either of their seven inches. Plus they have a song about Alameda, California! And they're from fucking Japan! Cool. SCHOLASTIC DETH, one of my favorite Bay Area bands ever, contribute five new tracks and boy do they fucking kick butt. I've said it over and over again—I wish this band could have stuck around longer. They were a great live band and their lyrics were refreshing with all the other shit out there, not afraid to criticize many of the stale ideas which have hung around in punk rock/hardcore. Besides that, they just rocked so fucking hard, I mean you wouldn't even believe it, man. Goddamn. I think this will be the last we'll hear from them. What a great comp. (WR)

(625 Thrashcore, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142, www.625thrash.com)

V/A - "Thrash Master" LP

This limited-to-500 Brazilian comp—featuring the likes of DISCARGA, NEU SPEAK,and INFECT—is a non-stop assault of ultra-fast, thrashy modern hardcore. Consistently intense and energetic, each of the six bands pulls through with a handful of furious tracks. Extensive Portuguese liner notes are included, along with English translations. The bulk of this comp consists of bands I've never heard before, all on par with anything labels like 625 have been releasing lately. For fans of hardcore—Brazilian, American, or otherwise—this is a completely solid comp worth getting a hold of. (VH)

(Sacred and Profane, A/c Douglas Fabiano, Rua Catequese 1787, Cep: 09090-401, Santo Andre, SP, BRASIL)

V/A - "Up the Grrrl" CD

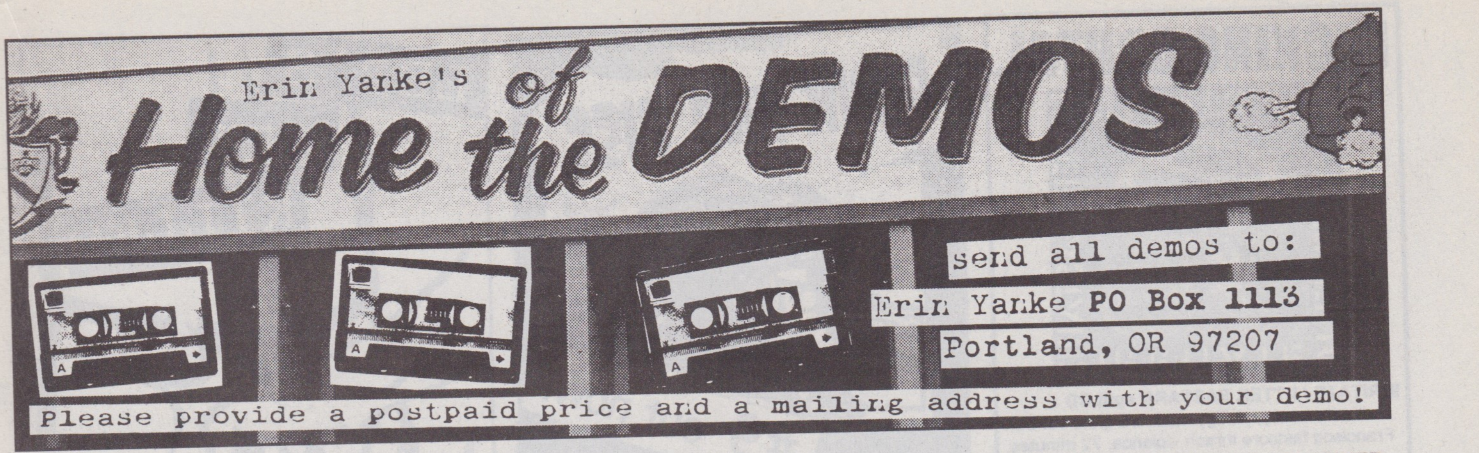
These are all female bands from Brazil whose sounds cover a wide array of punk styles with lyrics in English and in Portuguese. Highlights include BIGGS, HITCH LIZARD, KAOS KLITORIANO, LAVA, SHES, WITCHERY, and YOLK. A good overview of what Brazilian punk women have to offer. (SR)

(Panx, BP 5058, 31033 Toulouse CEDE X5, FRANCE, infes@panx.net)

V/A - "Wrong Side of the Tracks" EP

Four-way international grind split. NEEDFUL THINGS, from the Czech Republic, kick things off with their bass-heavy (two bassists) sound, making up for Australia's the KILL, who prefer their grind sans bassist, raw, and really fuckin' fast. Side B's got one of DAHMER's last songs, and a pretty good one at that, then LUCIFER D. LARYNX & THE SATANIC GRIND DOGS OF DEATH, from St. Louis, pitch in with six tracks of silly (duh), sample-laden drum-machine grind. Nothing's really outstanding here, but then it's all pretty solid too, so die-hard grind fans will probably dig this. (EL)

(Dry Retch, GPO Box 1200, Hobart TAS 7001, AUSTRALIA, dryretch@primus.com.au)



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Another month and more good demos. You all will kick yourself for not ordering this stuff, and bands, let's help the kids and list your postpaid prices! Thanks this month to Paul Curran for adjectives.

BLACK EYES CLUB play the kind of hardcore that still has some melody going on under the furious barrage of guitars and those poor drums getting the shit kicked out of them. The vocals are both nasally and shouted. Great cover of "Lifeline" by HUSKER DU. ($3 ppd. 10 song CD, lyrics included. 363 East 18th St., Hamilton ON L9A 4P7 Canada.)

DEAD CITY play 2 slow emotional songs, about their friends dying and their town rotting, that are solid and not stereotypical, with keyboards carrying a lot of the mood. The vocals are shouted, but you have the feeling he's probably looking at the audience (good) and not the amps (bad). then the other 2 songs are fast, and only feature the moody slow parts, no keyboards, more growling in the vocals. (4 songs, lyrics included. PO Box 3678, Memphis, TN 38173-0678.)

DEATH FIRST is also a great hardcore band, on the blazing-paced, buzzy-guitar-with-intricate-solos, two-vocals-and-catchy-mosh-parts team. Vocals are mostly shouted, both male and female, and only occasionally do they growl it up. ($1. 11 song cassette, no lyrics included. 1512 6th St. East, Menomonie, WI 54751.)

D.H.I.B.A.C. proves that French grindcore sounds similar to grindcore all over the world. The music switches around a tiny bit, going slower and more 4/4 style when taking a break from the blastbeats. The vocals are dueling—rabid high-pitched screams versus low-down growls. (18 song cassette, no lyrics included. Postfach 10 31 17, 60101 Frankfurt/Main, Germany.)

DOWN TO KILL has a cool live sound to this recording, vacillating between simple, straightforward, rough and garagey punk rock, and the fast stuff that simplifies the instrumentation. The vocals are raw and mean, and fit perfectly. ($2. 11 songs, lyrics included. 15 Pleasant St. Apt. B-3, Portland, ME 04101.)

EVEN IN BLACKOUTS has at least one acoustic guitar and maybe some other acoustic stuff going on in the TILT meets DISCOUNT mix. The vocals are cool but too loud. They do covers of YAZ, OPERATION IVY, and SCREECHING WEASEL. (12 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 148010, Chicago, IL 60614.)

FLOWER DESTROY is a pretty crazy mix of drum machine, buzzing guitar, synthesizer sound effects, and grungy style vocals. The pace spectrum goes from trippy to dance club. We're debating if this is what they call "Nu Metal," but even if everyone else knows all about this style, I haven't heard anything like it before. (12 song CD, no lyrics included. 341 Hikituchi, Maizuru, Kyoto 624-0841 Japan.)

FUNERAL SHOCK sound like a mid-tempo thrash band. I know that appears to be a contradiction, but it's true! That makes the mosh parts mid-tempo and sort of basic 3-chord punk style, which actually works well. The shouting singer might have a cold, or that might be effects. (6 song cassette, no lyric sheet. 4301 Horner St. Union City, CA 94587.)

IMPRACTICAL COCKPIT is still totally great and on this, their second demo, they sound less like the MINUTEMEN and more like the FALL. I'd say it was a 50-50 mixture at this point. More grooving slower parts between the unpredictable and amazingly still totally rockin' fast parts. The vocals are where the most drastic changes are, weaving into the music like an instrument to themselves. I love this band. (11 song cassette, lyric sheet. PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152.)

IMPRATICAL COCKPIT also has a split cassingle (!) out this time round with the equally great COUNTY Z, who play a quick little number, vocally driven, infectious and dancabley fast paced, featuring a fiddle. DOG FACED HERMANS-ish. (Get their record....but don't say you read about it here, this is a demo column!) ($1 ppd. 2 songs, lyrics included. PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152.)

JAN FEAT U.D.S.S.R. play straightforward ska. You know, mid-tempo, lots of horns, melodic guitar played strumming from the high strings to the low ones, and super up-front vocals. The last song is more like a variety show. (8 song CD, lyrics included. Rebschulgasse 3a/1, 2103 Langenzersdorf, Austria.)

THE LOADED UNDIES play simple rock stuff that's all over the place in terms of style. The country song has a grindcore part. The metal song is supposed to be a dance mix. The ska song has funny vocals imitating the horn solo. In general it's mid-tempo and all about sex. ($1. 9 song CD, lyrics included. 123-15 7th Ave, College Point, NY 11356.)

NORTH LINCOLN sound like melodic nostalgic Chicago punk, like PEGBOY, but way more poppy and more of the nowadays-pop-song tempo changes and stops and starts. ($4 ppd. 6 song CD, lyrics included. 1863 Sunvale Dr. Wyoming, MI 49509.)

ON ALERT start you off with the slowest bits you'll hear on this demo. The rest is pretty fast thrashy stuff with a vocalist that's shouting out his screams, and backup vocals of a punctuating group shouts. They've got the mosh parts to lunge around to, but they're one per song, if that. (7 song CD, lyrics included. 21 Nancy Lane, Amherst, NY 14228.)

RESIDUE reminds Paul of SICK PLEASURE, the similarities being it's young, snotty and dirgy. It's definitely in the family of mean Bay Area bands of the 1980s. There's nothing poppy about this. (6 song CD, no lyrics included. 19 Albury Place, Aberdeen, Scotland, UK AB116TQ.)

ROT and **PLANNED COLLAPSE** show us about working together on this split cassette. ROT, who are from Brazil, play fast and brutal. Sometimes they start the song off with a cool bass vamp, but for the most part they are on the slower side of the grindcore spectrum. The music sort of seems to take a back seat to the dual (screaming and growling) vocals. PLANNED COLLAPSE, from New Jersey, are noisier and faster, and mix up their songs a lot more, switching parts and tempos. The vocals are raw throat style, but they take a backseat to the music, especially the drums. I might be totally full of shit, though, because I don't have the ease of one side being one band, and flipping it over to hear the other. Maybe my reviews are in backwards order. We poor reviewers could use a little more direction, but you fans will just enjoy. ($3, 17 songs on the ROT side, and PC has 5 songs. No lyrics for either band. 3536 S. Lombard, Berwyn, IL 60402.)

SCENT OF HUMAN HISTORY is almost dirgy in the slower parts (or songs), with the bass really being what hooks you in, and the guitar adding interesting layers. Then they bust into fast parts (or songs) where the guitar is propelling things forward. The drumming is keeping things simple when they need to be, but if you pay attention, it's fucking awesome. There's a dark mood, but it's angry and motivating, too. The vocals are screamed mostly but with an edge of singing to them. I highly recommend this. ($2. 382 St. Luke Pl., Franklin Sq., NY 11010.)

The **UKE AVEC** and **ETWAN SHERLEW** split cassette is really 2 brothers jumping in on each others acoustic projects. Mostly guitars and singing, but some surprise bits like fooling around with the tape, and talking to strangers who walk in while the tape is rolling. It's a really sweet tape, and how stoked must the folks be? Very proud, I bet. ($3 ppd. Countless songs, no lyrics included. PO Box 52096, New Orleans, LA 70152.)

VENIAL I.V. play sore throat screaming, mid-tempo for our times, stripped down and bass-less engaging hardcore. And, as a testament to the power of punk rock, their song "State of Alert Vs. School of America" probably was the straw that broke the camel's back in getting the name changed to Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. Good work, fellas! (7 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 9263, Missoula, MT 59807-9263.)

YHDEKSAS SURMANLUOTI say they play tighter than this now, but I think this is totally rockin and powerful thrash that is not relying on the tricks of the metal world. The thrash parts are driving, the catchy parts are no less powerful and I mean catchy in the way that it makes you want to jump on all your friends in the pit. Shouted vocals top it all off. Yee haw! I don't know enough about Finnish punk to tell you how they fit in, but this band is great. (A side note, I am not the Erin that used to sing for Harum Scarum, and I passed along your hellos...) ($2, or 2 Euros. 12 song cassette, lyrics included. Kannaksenkatu 31, 33250 Tampere, Finland.)

Also, I have in the past and will in the future record a demo set for inclusion on Maximum Rocknroll Radio, which you've listened to by now I'm sure. No promised for timeline or inclusion, but now the Portland airwavesare not the exclusive domain of the demos.

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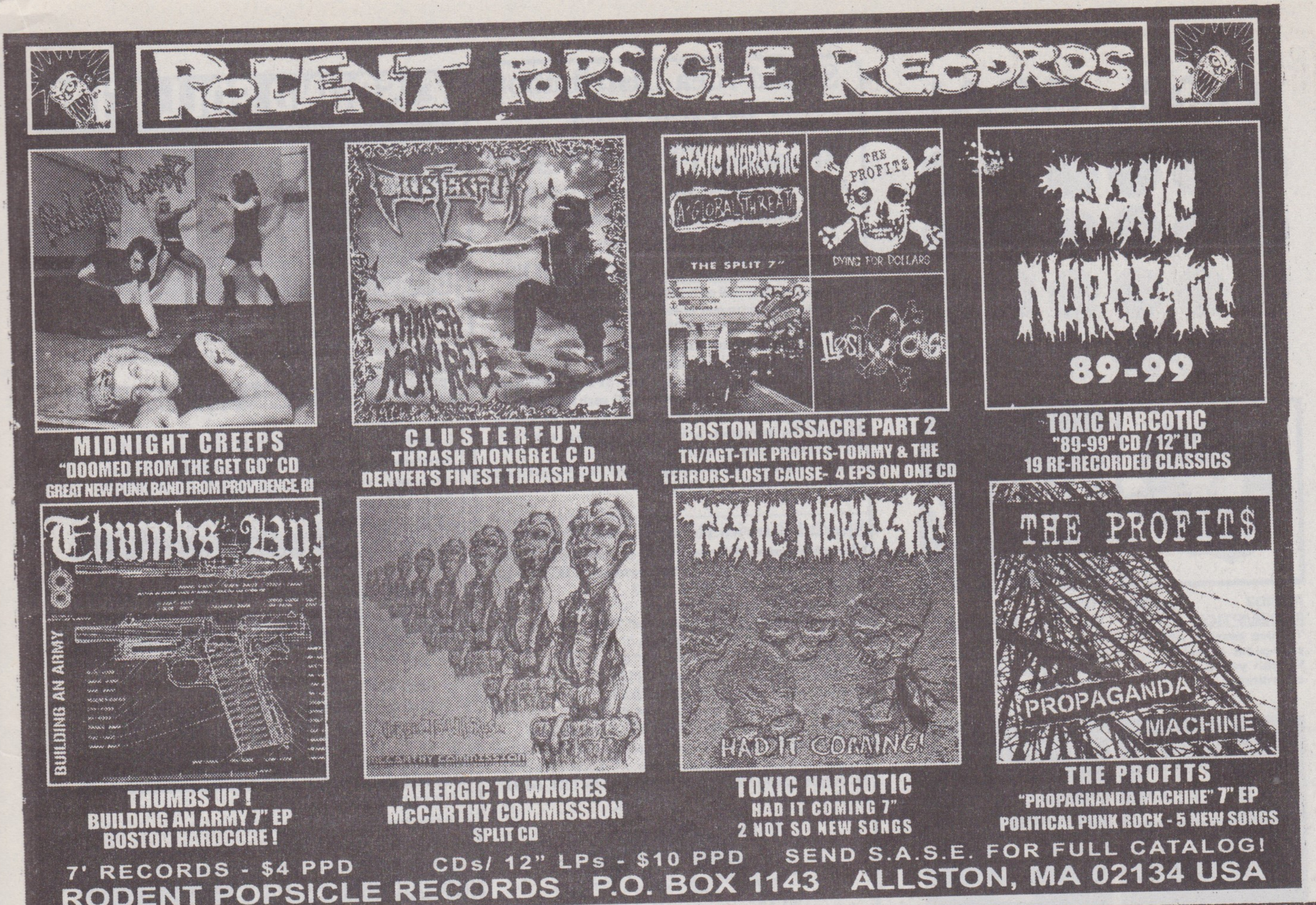

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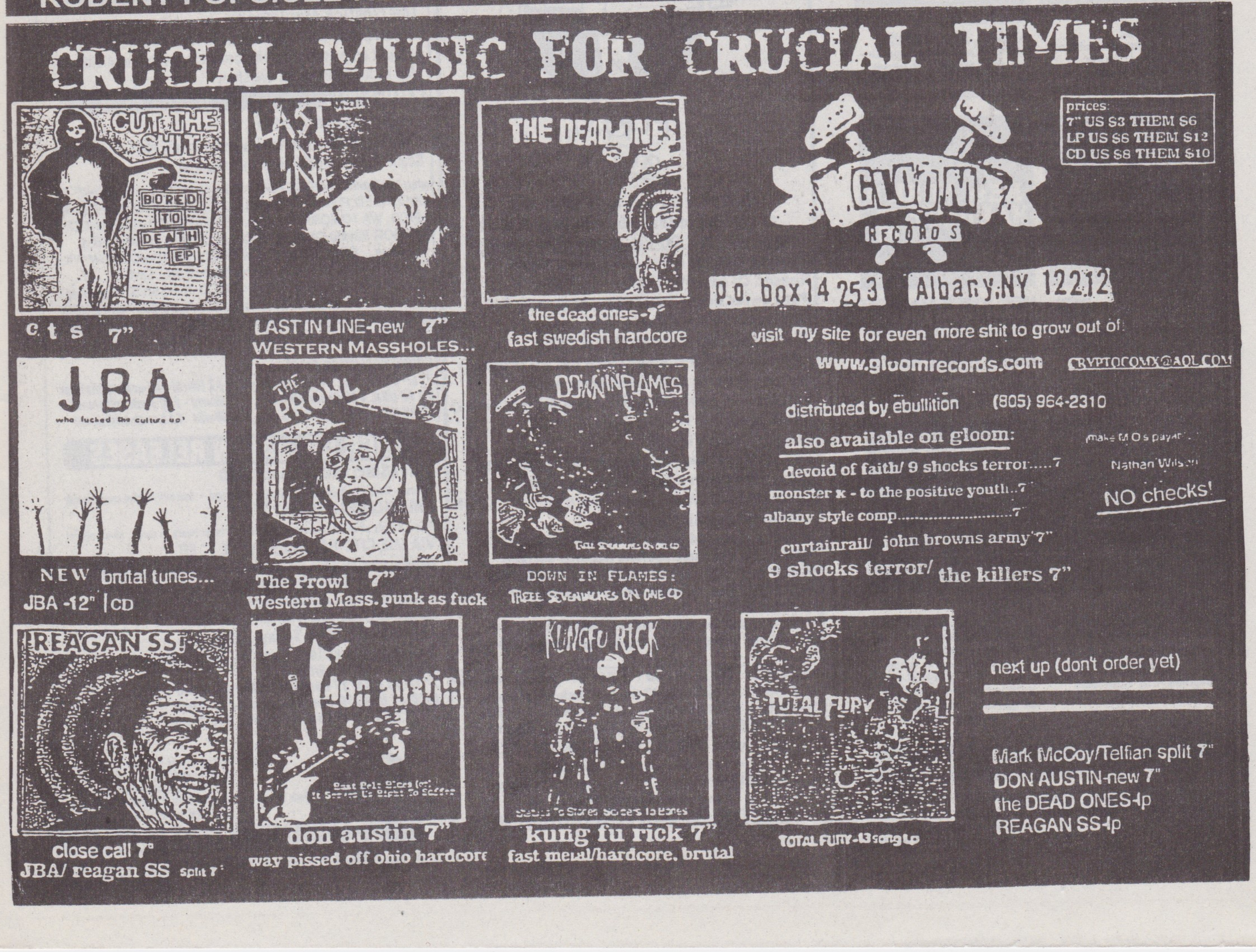

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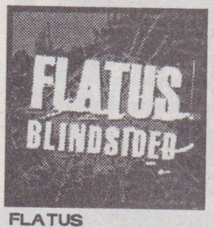

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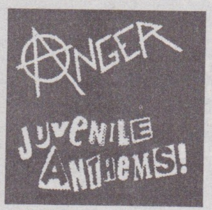

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ZINES

Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booze, (CB) Chanel Bowman, (BD) Ben Ditch, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (KE) Kara Electric, (GF) Gardner Fusuhara, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JL) Jennifer L. Mushnick, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

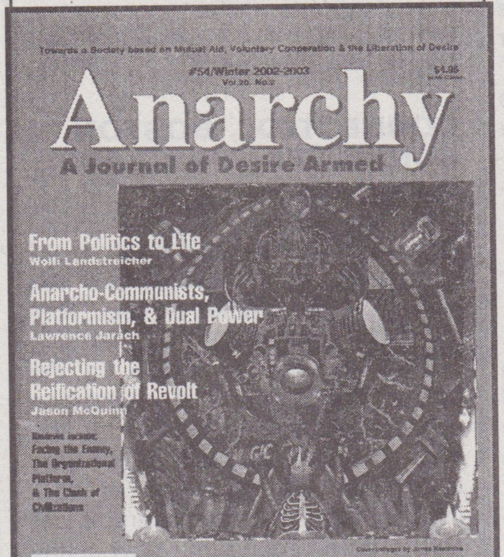
ABSOLUTELY ZIPPO #30
5.5 x 8 - copied - 32 pgs

In this issue, the first after the release of the mammoth *Zippo* anthology, editor Robert Eggplant prints a bleakly accurate essay about the commercialization of public space in Berkeley (and beyond). The vitality of various Bay Area punk spots is discussed as well. The cartoon about the punk rock squirrels was tops: *Zippo* art isn't *Zippo* art unless it can be carved into a school desk with a razor blade. I could do without the reprinted rants and D&D monster stats, but it goes with the territory. And then...*Zippo* talks about sex. In the interest of strengthening our community, Eggplant encourages other people to write about it too. Good idea. You first. Robert will probably give you a copy free or very cheap if you can find him—try Gilman Street or the Med. (AC)

ANARCHY: A JOURNAL OF DESIRE ARMED #54 / $4.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 84 pgs

This issue deals with the creeping specter of organizationalism. Similar to most structural solutions to human problems, "organizational" anarchism attempts to fit round pegs into square holes. Instead of attending to the content of their politics and the vibrancy of their resistance, organizationalist anarchists focus on the coherence of their platform and effectiveness of their (baseless) strategy. This issue of *A: AJODA* approaches these problems from a variety of angles. Dual Power is attacked as an effective transitional anarchist strategy, The Tyranny of Structurelessness is questioned as a useful anti-authoritarian resource, and the Platform (Organizational Platform of the Libertarian Communists) is derided as archaic, anti-individual, and ideological. While this issue establishes the sectarian boundaries (and takes a position on) of the current anarchist milieu, it does so without feeling, as if you are being sold solutions to problems that you do not have. (AR)

C.A.L. Press / PO Box 1446 / Columbia, MO 65205-1446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Jason McQuinn
Twilight of the Machines
John Zerzan

ARTCORE #18 / $3
9 x 12 - printed - 36 pgs

Always a pleasure to see *Artcore* roll into *MRR* HQ. If you read the interview with him two months you already know that he is an opinionated, obsessive punk rock maniac—qualities that make for the best reading when it comes to music oriented zines. This time around, Welly brings us interviews with Channel 3, DFA, Pitch Black, and Our War—plus punk history lessons on bands like Rattus, Adolescents, the Big Boys, and the Effigies. He's been at it since 1986 with no sign of slowing down anytime soon. One of the best music zines going these days, so I highly recommend tracking this down! (MT)

c/o 1 Aberdulais Rd. / Gabalfa / Cardiff / CF14 2PH / Wales / UK

BLEED #2 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs

I'm beginning to find that my favorite zines are theme-based zines. I guess years of reading the same damn format is getting to me. Sometimes the themes work and other times they fail, just like any other zine. The theme for *Bleed* this time around is letters written to folks and never sent. Sue uses this issue to exorcise some demons, communicate the sadness of friends and relationships lost, and put on paper those things we all wish we could tell people but for some reason can't. Frequently these personal zines bore the shit out of me, but the letters in here are brief and interesting. (CR)

PO Box 4316 / Philadelphia, PA 19118
Sue@kiwi-tree.net

BURNT #5/ $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 20 pgs

"*Burnt* zine is a cut and paste zine containing a mix of political and personal writings by several writers from all over, along with a good amount of zine and music reviews" say the publishers of *Burnt* zine. Well said. This zine wasn't bad at all. It had a good article about the politics of pornography, written by a pro-porn feminist. The music review section wasn't sloppy and had some respectable reviews. Two thumbs up. (KE)

c/o Franco Ortega / PO Box, 5754, Parsippany, NJ 07054
burntine@yahoo.com

CHUMPIRE #152, 153 / 1 stamp

8.5 x 11 - copied - 2 pgs

This is a kind of broadsheet where opinions on the rock and/or roll music is interspersed with little "slice of life" pieces of an author who isn't particularly interesting. Or if he is, he doesn't give himself enough running room to really take off. The rock and roll that the author favors appears to be of the "brutal" and "hardcore" variety that I guess is a good counterpoint to pop or jazz. (AR)

PO Box 27 / Annville, PA 17003-0027

CHUMPIRE #156 / 1 stamp or trade

8.5 x 11 - copied - 2 pgs

It's short, it's nice enough. Greg writes about his job, bands, and punk business, includes some reviews, and plugs his label. Please note the new address. (JM)

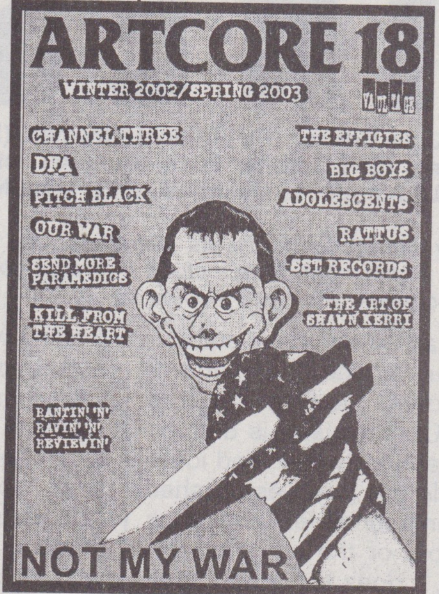
PO Box 27 / Annville, PA 17003-0027

COMPLETE CONTROL #10 / $2

7 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs

Complete Control is usually very personal and also very focused on local happenings or history in Richmond. There's a running theme of tragedy and struggle in this issue: a tribute to a friend who recently committed suicide; the murder of a local man who struggled with HIV and homelessness; the editor's analysis of his own participation in sexism/sexual assault (note: it is *not* the "OK, now I've confessed, I am absolved of my wrong-doing" style of self-reflection). It closes off with the more hopeful manifesto of the Better Days anarchist collective; perhaps the next issue will provide more information on what the collective is doing to live out that mission statement. (MD)

PO Box 5021 / Richmond, VA 23220



CONNECTED: BOSTON / CONNECTED: PORTLAND / $2

5.5 x 11 - copied - 42 pgs

These two issues, and from what I gather all of his issues, are the result of a simple project that involves going to a city, asking dozens of random people on the street the same two questions about the city, and then compiling them in alphabetical order. The idea is great, but after ten pages of reading the same damn answers, it got just a little redundant. How many times do you need to read that people in Portland are friendly, or that the best advice for people in Boston is to drive more carefully? It did manage to keep my interest all the way through both issues, but I'm crazy about geographical sketches. Hopefully the next issues will contain a bit more diversity in the answers. If you're interested in reading about how people perceive their respective cities, you might get a kick out of these, if you're not... well you won't. (CR)

17604 N 39th Ave / Glendale, AZ 85308-3104
rbwmail@yahoo.com

THE DEAD KINGS ACTIVITY FUN BOOK AND LEARNING CENTER #1 / $1

5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 14 pgs

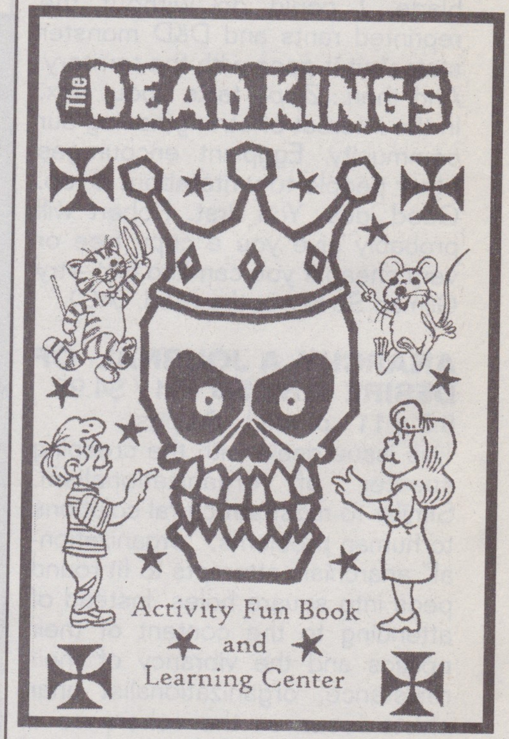
It seems like the main point of this zine is either a) to get you, the reader, to go to a Dead Kings show, or b) to get you, the reader, to suck all of the band members' cocks. Either way, this parody of a children's activity book is predictable at best, slimy and misogynistic at worst. Ugh. If you think calling women "whores" is cool, this should be right up your alley. (CJ)

PO Box 9680 / Charlotte, NC 28299

DIME STORE #7 / $1

5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 26 pgs

A sort of travel journal or collection of short anecdotes that reminds me a lot of *Cometbus* (even the handwriting is similar). There doesn't seem to be one theme or really a sense of continuity from one story to the next, but maybe I'm just missing the point. Anyway, it's a

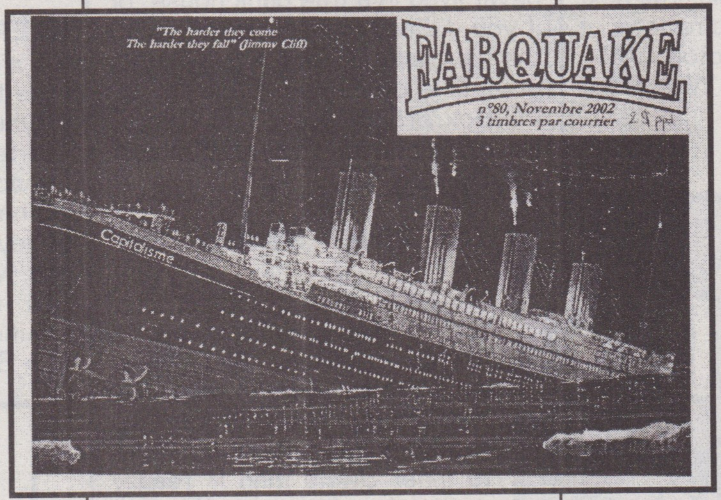

The DEAD KINGS
Activity Fun Book and Learning Center

nice-lookin' zine and the dude definitely put some work into it. Well worth your hard-earned dollar. (CJ)
10 Yellow Flax / Littleton, CO 80127

DUNK AND PISS #9 / $1
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 62 pgs
This kid rules. I read the whole thing on the train, which I felt was appropriate, and giggled with every page. Alex captures youthful defiance and exuberance. His creative attack on stories and "stream of consciousness *or* stream of urine" style really kills me. Contents include near-death experiences with trains, the library, "the return of the old fat vindictive school lady," prom takeover: hilarious, and complete with illustrations that warm the heart. And it came with a piece of candy taped to the back! You want this. (JB)
11 Alger Dr / Rochester, NY 14624
alexyoshi@hotmail.com

EARQUAKE #80 / $2
5.75 x 8.25 - copied - 28 pgs - French
It's soothing to get a new issue of *Earquake,* a bit like having a copy of the SF Bay Area's List in your hands. The lovingly updated listings of shows, stores, etc. are like maps for punks, so we know when and where to lurk. *Earquake* eschews columns and retrospectives, concentrating on the present with consistently thoughtful reviews of zines, records, books, videos, etc. focused on, but not limited to the French scene. This issue includes a short interview with the recently dissolved DS 13. A celebration of the rewards of sticking around in one place. (AC)
Frédéric Leca / 55 rue St Jean / 88300 Neufchateau / France
earquake@hotmail.com

FORME LETALE #4 / $1, free in France
5.75 x 8.25 - copied - 24 pgs - French
This mostly crust-oriented French newcomer includes interviews with Algolagnie, a band called La Societé Elle a Mauvaise Haleine, and Deviance, all from France. In addition, there's a cut 'n' paste review section with few, but thorough reviews of a smattering of releases of varying formats and origins. This section is a bit thin—I'd prefer more reviews and one fewer interview. Also, there are a couple of food-related recipes and rants. (AC)
12 Allée des Saules / 59890 Quesnoy sur Deule / France
formeletale@chez.com



FRACTURE #23 / $3, free in the UK
8.5 x 11 - offset - 92 pgs
Big, bulky, and long on content. *Fracture* is a zine that bears some superficial resemblance to *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll,* in that it mixes rock 'n' roll with politics, offers top tens ("playlists") at the front of the mag, and has a lengthy list of columnists and a big review section. That said, it's got a distinct (English) personality of its own and a keen look that this grubby rag doesn't often approach. Boasts interviews with the Robots, the Arrivals, Bob Suren of Sound Idea Distribution, ex-Snuff dude Simon Wells, and Sobermind Records. Free in the UK, available for a price for the rest of us Citizens of the World. (JH)
PO Box 309 / Leeds / LS2 7AH UK

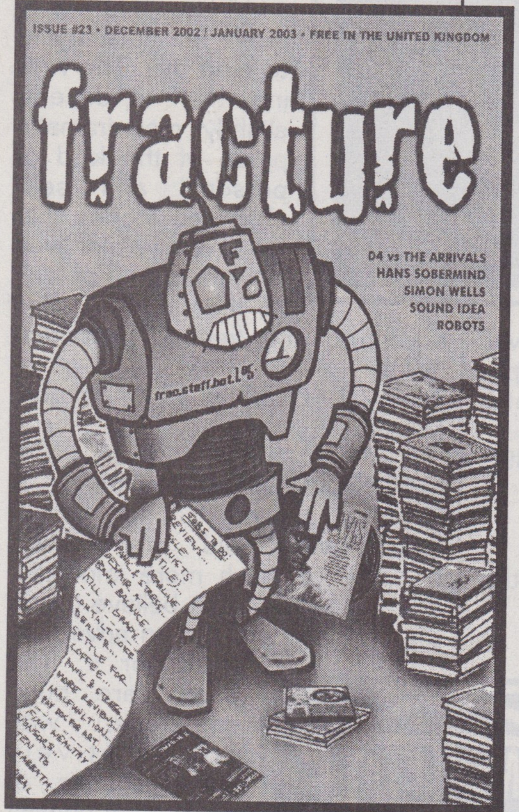
FORME*LETALE
PRIX LIBRE OU MOURIR!!!
n°04

GLASS HOUSES #2 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 16 pgs
OK, maybe I'm just getting old, but this zine really screwed up my eyes! The type is blurry and way too small, so that really drove me nuts, trying to read this. The writing itself is decent, slightly melodramatic prose of the kind of personal and self-absorbed stories that we have all either lived or wanted to. For fans of the genre. Trades accepted, and free to prisoners. (MD)
Arriel / 19 Grove St #3 / Arlington, MA 02476

HANDCOLORED #1 / free?
8.5 x 11 - copied - 12 pgs
Since when did presentation become so much more important than content? I can't believe this is the real zine and not an advertisement for it. The pages are huge cardstock, with comparatively small chunks of writing that consist of advice for new college kids about how to live on your own, a couple of show reviews, and a brief list of places to go in Ohio. *Handcolored* looks really good—all eight pages of it that have any content. The artistic intent comes off as sincere—in the future I hope the author considers writing something to go with it. The sparseness amazes me, at least—

but not really in a good way. (JB)
251 N Main #5497 / Cedarville, OH 45314
www.handcolored.net

HAZARDOUS WASTE #1/ free
8.5 x 11 - copied - 21 pgs
One side is about a guy named Mike's life involving music. The next two pages contain music reviews of hardcore bands, and photos. (KE)
210 Dewey St Apt 3 / Worcester, NJ 01610
msmith@clarku.edu

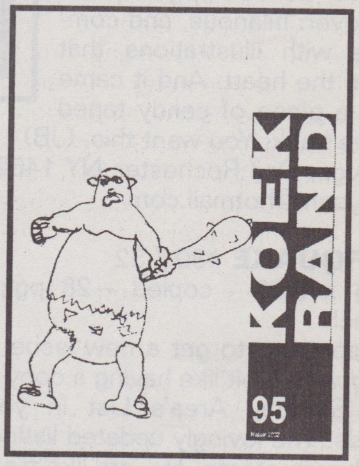

ISSUE #23 • DECEMBER 2002 / JANUARY 2003 • FREE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM
fracture
D4 vs THE ARRIVALS
HANS SOBERMIND
SIMON WELLS
SOUND IDEA
ROBOTS

I'M JOHNNY AND I DON'T GIVE A FUCK #5 / $4
8 .5 x 5.5 - copied - 100 pgs
Finally, it's time to enjoy another delicious installment in the *I'm Johnny and I Don't Give a Fuck* series. It's been years since his last issue came out, but the delay has been worth it. Andy presents a great story of the life of a house. Specifically, a fucked-up punk house complete with traveling bands, wandering roommates, broken toilets, inappropriate fecal matter, and a derelict landlord. It's always odd how someone can write about a nasty situation and somehow make you long for it. His story has cast of thousands and each character has a story to share. Andy's prose, wit, and insight keep you hooked the whole way through. I won't spoil the end, but it's a great read from start to finish. If you never lived in a true punk house, or if you did and want to fondly recall the ups and downs, you'll get a great time out of this. (CR)
PO Box 21533-1850 / Commercial Dr / Vancouver, BC / V5N 5T5 Canada

THE INNER SWINE Vol. 8, #4 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - offset - 60 pgs
Sixty pages of well-intentioned bitching, moaning, and grousing. Scratch that: that might be my first impression of the mag and its editor, but there's more to *Inner Swine* than is readily apparent on first rush. "Fame," and its rewards and costs, is the theme of this issue: check out the spiel on the MTV Video Music Awards, or the observations on the cheap brand of celebrity available on the Internet. There's quite a bit of hating and baiting in these pages. You may bust a gut while reading "Everyone's an Asshole, Especially the Cretins I Work With." You may walk away. No music in this issue, incidentally: you're gonna have to look elsewhere if you're after a Sum 41 record review. (JH)
Jeff Somer s / PO Box 3024 / Hoboken, NJ 07030
mreditor@theinnerswine.com

KEEPSCHTUMM #4 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 19 pgs
The main attraction of *Keepschtumm* is the article entitled "Bush: The International Terrorist." I was interested to hear the opinion of someone on the outside, who brings up good points, though briefly, about the history of the US and Iraq. There are interviews with the Mispelt, Zion Train, the Vandals, the Fish Brothers, and AFI. Also, there's a funny paranoid rant about phone tapping. Really though, $3 is kind of a lot, considering this zine is pretty short, printed on a computer (with blue ink! gross!) and the spelling is terrible. (JB)
33 Henry Taylor St / Fflint, Fflintshire / Wales / CH6 5PP UK
keepschtumm@msn.com

KEEPSCHTUMM #5 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 19 pgs
I like this issue way better than #4, maybe because it feels more lighthearted. There is a commentary on the cosmetic industry's animal testing habits, a survey of the habits of bogeymen (15% enjoy handicrafts and will turn parts of their victims into decorative objects to use around the home!) band interviews with Strung Out, Eastfield, Bullet of Diplomacy, Millencolin, The Cox, and Chumbawamba. What is the deal with using a lot of the same graphics in both issues? Hmmm. (JB)
33 Henry Taylor St / Fflint, Fflintshire / Wales / CH6 5PP UK
keepschtumm@msn.com



KOEKRAND #95 / $4
8 x 6 - copied - 28 pgs - Dutch
Well, lots of you young folks won't have heard of this zine. And lots of you older ones will remember this zine as one of the best zines from the early and mid-80s. I still have my first copies with there sharp black and white contrasts, anti-apartheid graphics, and interviews with Crass and other cool bands. *Koekrand* influenced me greatly, so it is good to have a new edition in

my hands. This issue contains an article on Muslim punk, some columns, plus book, zine, and record reviews. Especially those of you who remember Tim Yo should drop Johan a line. He will probably appreciate it. Thanks! (HH)

Johan van Leeuwen / Laan van Berlioz 6 / 2151 GR Nieuw Vennep, Netherlands

MEDIA READER #6 / $5

11 x 14 - printed - 32 pgs

This is a pleasurable magazine. There is an extensive interview with Mimi Nguyen (of *Slant*, *Slander*, and *Punk Planet*) where the interviewer actually has the sense to give her open-ended enough questions to make the thing interesting. There are some interesting articles on foreign affairs; Chiapas, Genova, and Botswana. An interesting article called "Legitimating Unseen Violence" seems like an academic retelling of the mid-90s personal politics story. The rest are reviews with lots of white space and tastefully arranged advertising. (AR)

PO Box 220386, Chicago, IL 60622

MOTORCYCHO #17 / $3

5 x 8 - printed - 28 pgs

Written by a fan of motorcycles for other fans. If you have a garage filled with older, cheap bikes that are never really fixed up to the state you desire, drink beer while you listen to your three-chord rock, and obsess over the state of your unfinished bikes, then this is the zine for you. While I am a serious motorcycle rider, I never really got into the "scene" of it all and find this particular obsession a little hard to take. It has its charms, but the idea of having a serious conversation about *the Wild Ones* or *Easy Rider* is enough to give me the willies. (AR)

PO Box 1564 / Point Roberts, WA 98281-1564

NI DIOS, NI ESTADO, NI JAMON
anarcosxe hc punk zine

Issue Seven
Free
The New Scheme
51
28
11
Dillinger Four
Shadows Fall
DeSoto Records
Matt Pond, PA
Hiretsukan
Latterman

NERO FIDDLED WHILE ROME BURNED

7 x 8.5 - copied - 24 pgs

Boring rant zine about how bad Amerikka is. While I am no fan of the government that inhabits the place, I can think of better things to do with my time than rail against it in a mixture of tinfoil-hat conspiracy and English Composition 101 styles. Well, maybe I can't, but I would avoid such prickly descriptions as "Ayatollah John Asscroft authored legislation DENYING AMERICAN CITIZENS THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS." Yikes! 24 pages of that—no thanks. (AR)

PO Box 3050, Eureka, CA 95502

NEUFUTUR #8 / $1 or trade

5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 24 pgs

A personal zine. The editor discusses his college and visiting his girlfriend, describes some dreams and himself, and reprints Tori Amos lyrics. This zine was of no interest to me due to the dull writing and mundane events, and the cornball lyrics crossed the line of ridiculousness. Included are two smaller zines which you can also safely pass on. (JM)

James McQuinston / UB Box 6064 / 408 S Locust / Greencastle, IN 46135

www.neufutur.com

THE NEW SCHEME #7 / 6 issues for $8

8.5 x 11 - printed - 64 pgs

I never thought I'd see it, but here it is—a free music zine from Colorado that totally does not suck. It's made up of (could you guess?) interviews, a few columns, reviews, and ads. I've never read a bad interview with Dillinger Four, and this one is pretty good too. Also featured are Hiretsukan, shorter talks with Latterman and DeSoto Records, and some indie rock and Massachusetts metal shit. There's a ton of reviews which are actually in-depth and well-written. I would pick this up and read it all the way through. (JM)

PO Box 19873 / Boulder, CO 80308

www.thenewscheme.com

NI DIOS, NI ESTADO, NI JAMON #1 / 1,20 euros, $3

5.75 x 8.25 - copied - 64 pgs - Spanish

This new hardcore zine from Spain focuses on the ethical, rather than the musical side of sXe, though the "Breve Historia del xStraight Edgex" and other articles make it clear that the editor is firmly in the camp. There are a number of articles, mostly about the dangers of drugs and so on, with the occasional item of interest to me, like "El Arte y El Movimento Punk." (AC)

vegansxe@hotmail.com

POOR & FORGOTTEN #9 / $1 or trade

5.5 x 8 - copied - 20 pgs

Published from in the hole, *Poor &*

Forgotten consists mostly of collage, personal photos, and short bits of emotional prose. Also included is an interview with the painfully christened Straight Edge Kegger and a short piece about punk radio. (AC)

Matthew Johnson / PO Box 59 / Linwood, MA 01525-9995

POSITIVE CREED #4 / 80p or $2
5.75 x 8.25 - copied - 32 pgs

Interviews, reviews, and a bit of other writing make up this punk/goth publication. A vampire poet, some "exotic creatures of the night," Active Slaughter, Academy Morticians, and Wat Tyler are queried; the interviews are pretty ordinary and basic. The editor defends poetry and reports on a London anti-war protest. There are no ads. Hopefully future issues will be stronger. (JM)

17a Charnley Avenue / St Thomas, Exeter / Devon / EX4 1RD / England

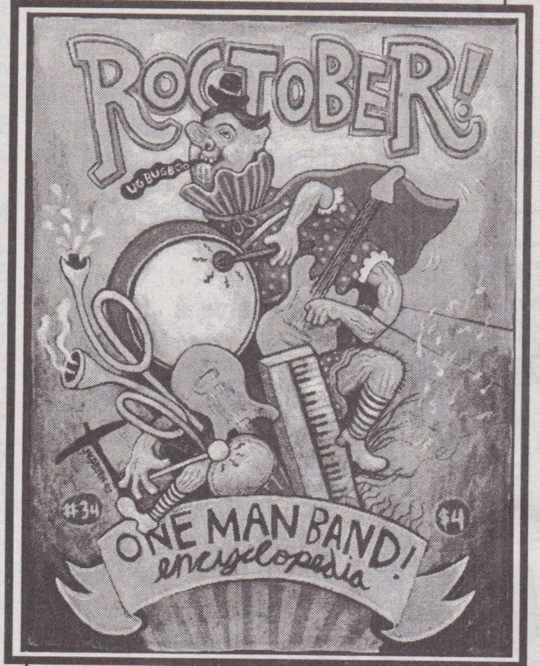
PUNK FLYERS #16 / $3
8.5 x 11 - copied - 17 pgs

It's all in the title. For your three bones you'll get a collection of some classic American punk flyers from the 1980s (among them a classic meeting of Black Flag and Charles Manson as drawn by Raymond Pettibon; GBH butting guts with the Accused, and a cholo devil advertising Suicidal Tendencies). There's also a quick fact sheet detailing recent haps in the Seattle area, and a garish/gruesome cover illustration of a pierced clown-girl that's could drive anyone to Nyquil©. Coulda been a little thicker, but there are some nice handbills here if that's what you're into. (JH)

Rob Frishkoff / 502 Minor Ave N #6 / Seattle, WA 98109

RAD PARTY #30 / $3
4 x 5.5 - printed - 108 pgs - French

I've begun to suspect that *Rad Party* editor Stéphane does not really exist, as such. Perhaps he is actually an elaborate computer program and his name is an acronym, like HAL in *2001*. Perhaps, a team of scientists feeds punk records and zines into a slot and after some whirring and buzzing, a spool of detailed, neatly handwritten prose spits out the other side. Or, perhaps, he is actually a team of trained monkeys performing much the same function. Much of *Rad Party* is focused on American punk, even though he lives in Paris. He writes about nights out and about in the City of Lovers, including show reviews, but much of his heart seems to lie right here in the SF Bay Area (or at least in our punk history). If you can read a little French, pick this up in a heartbeat. (AC)



Small Budget Productions / BP #7 / 78110 Le Vesinet Cedex / France

RAUMSCHIFF WUCHERPREIS #10 / $4
11 x 8 - printed - 68 pgs - German

Great Christmas cover—hope those kids grow up to be punks before they blow their brains out. Anyway, this zine is mostly columns, including the Wucher News, plus lots and lots of reviews, and one big catalog. The zine has a great layout. Hey, it's the Scumfuck tradition, well worth supporting. (HH)

Schmitz / Postfach 100709 / 46527 Dinslaken / Germany

REVIVAL INK #3 / $2 or trade
8.5 x 11 - copied - 24 pgs

Mad, bad (as in "bad *good* bad") and dangerous to read. Punk as hell. It's the so-called "Halloween Issue," meaning that they're either still celebrating three months after the fact or they're gearing up for 2003 (probably both). Interviews with Louisville Sluggers the Revenants and Angst, area artist Owen Leitsch, a tour of Haunted Louisville, and lots of cut-and-paste skullduggery. I'm game. There's always room for one more cracked skull. (JH)

Eric Adkison / 215 W. Lee St, Apt 1 / Louisville, KY 40208

RIOT 77 #5 / $5
11 x 8 - printed - 52 pgs

When I get foreign zines I rarely get UK ones, so I was happy to see *Riot 77* in my box. The zine mostly covers older bands such as Angelic Upstarts, Bad Religion, Vice Squad, Dead Kennedys, Toxic, and Foreign Legion. There are new record reviews and reviews of books like *American Hardcore* and *We Got The Neutron Bomb: The Story Of*

LA Punk . There are also lots and lots of cool photos. Hey, it is a damn good read—cheers! (HH)
Cian Hynes / 31 St Patricks Park / Clondalkin / Dublin 22 / Ireland
riot77magazine@hotmail.com

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STRAIGHT
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FANZINE

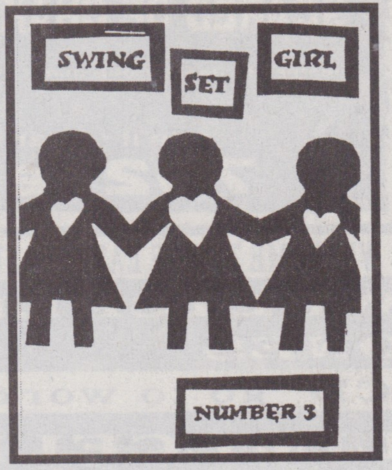
ROCTOBER! #34 / $4
8.5 x 11 - printed - 120 pgs
Far too exhaustive for me to even comprehend, this issue of *Roctober!* is billed as a veritable one-man band encyclopedia. From Atom and His Package to Swedish black metal goblin Mortiis to Frank Zappa, solo artists of every imaginable genre are represented here: some in painstaking detail, others with only a few words. Also included in the encyclopedia are books, movies, and various other media that are about (or include) one-man bands. Basically, if it even mentions a solo musician, it's probably in this zine. Yeah, it's kind of a weird thing to write an encyclopedia about, but I applaud *Roctober!* for undertaking this project. After all, if they didn't, who would? (CJ)
1507 E 53rd St #617 / Chicago, IL 60615

ROCKET QUEEN # 2 / $1.50
7 x 8.5 - copied - 64 pgs
Like the previous issue, this zine is all about sex-work, specifically about working as a stripper. This time, the editor moves from small-town living to the drunken craziness of New Orleans. It's mainly a chronicle of different experiences on the job, with little bits of reflection that just really scratch the surface—about the damage done—drinking continually to get through the day and how stripping alters the editor's ability to relate to men. If you're familiar with the book *Sex Work*, there are no real surprises here—the men that are either pathetic or jerks, the behind-the-scenes camaraderie and competition between the dancers, and the temptation to stay for the money. It's hard to tell if this zine is a plea for attention or help, a warning to those considering the profession, or a resource for other sex workers. At times it comes across as all of the above. (MD)
Janet / PO Box 64 / Asheville, NC 28802

STRAIGHT SOB #4 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
This is an eclectic, general purpose punk rock zine. The content varies from vegan carrot cake recipes to hand drawn maps (adventure zine style) of the small town that the author lives in. The spirit of the zine is really positive and best summed up these lines from the outro "It's up to the punx," "We can't forget the fact that we must act soon, or our lives truly are in grave danger... So, I guess we punks have to continue trying, using all of our creativity, to influence everyone's lives in a positive way." If only we could bottle up that kind of energy and have a drink to start our day. (AR)
63 Highland Rd / Hackettstown, NJ 07840

SWING SET GIRL #3 / $1
4 x 5.5 - copied - 26 pgs
This zine will assure you that the high school riot grrl contingent is alive and well. Rudimentary feminism guides editor Sarah as she teeters between the allure of domestic partnership and a growing sense of self. Includes a mini-zine about female genital mutilation. (AC)
Sarah / PO Box 5754 / Parsippany, NJ 07054

VOICES WAKE US #4/ $1
5.5 x 8 - copied - 40 pgs
I really liked this guys mentality. His writing isn't boring at all. Still, I could see where one might not enjoy it, or even find this zine not worth a buck. It's pretty long and almost all about metal, black metal, more metal, hardcore, and some interviews. Not bad. Not great. (KE)
5290 Lerner Hall / New York, NY 10027
voiceswakeuszine@hotmail.com



WE NEVER SLEEP Vol. 3, #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
I really appreciate the rising number of anarchist and political prisoner support groups in existence today. Instead of forming another chapter in a largely illusory organization (that isn't going to help much anyway) groups like APLAN (Anarchist Prisoner's Legal Aid Network, the publisher of *We Never Sleep*) are actively supporting prisoners in their location. This newsletter in zine form is high quality, with lots of very current news on OR prisoners and a grab bag of letters from prisoners throughout the country. (AR)
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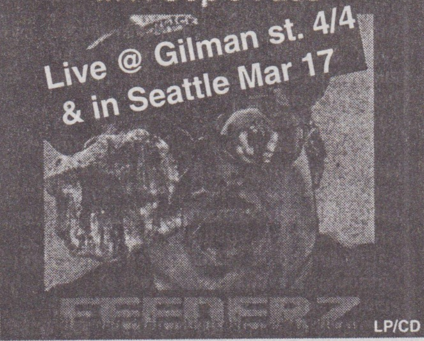

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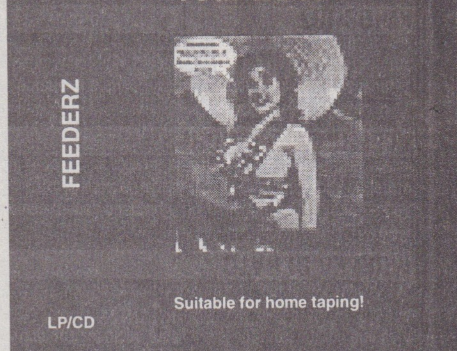

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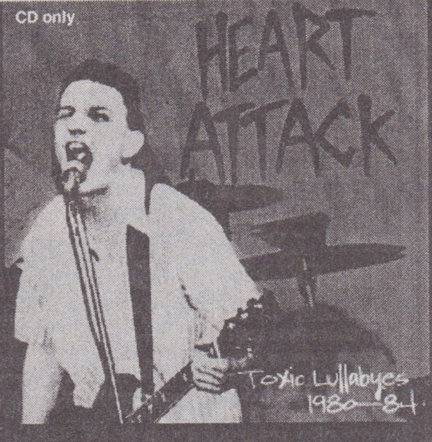

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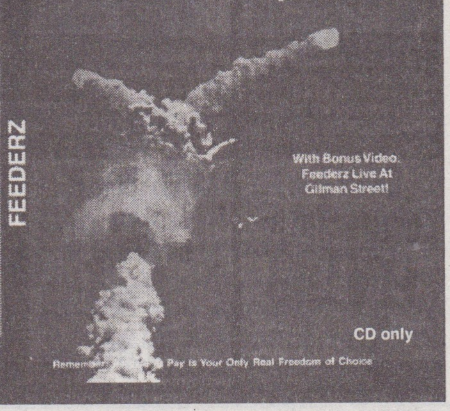

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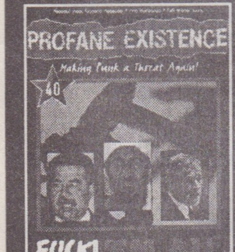

Profane Existence Magazine #40
Profane Existence, the international anarcho-punk resource magazine, is now being published quarterly again. PE #40 is out now (anti-war theme, plus interviews with Scorned, Bleeding Kansas, and La Mantra de Fhiqria). Issue #41 out in February 2003!

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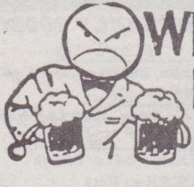

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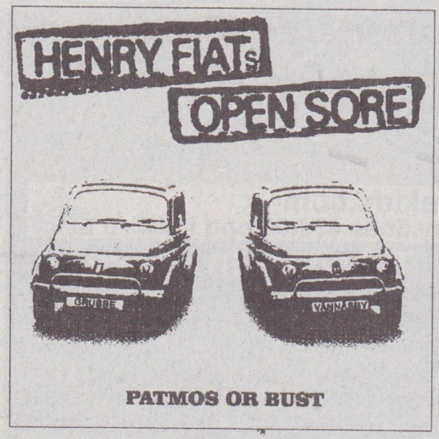

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